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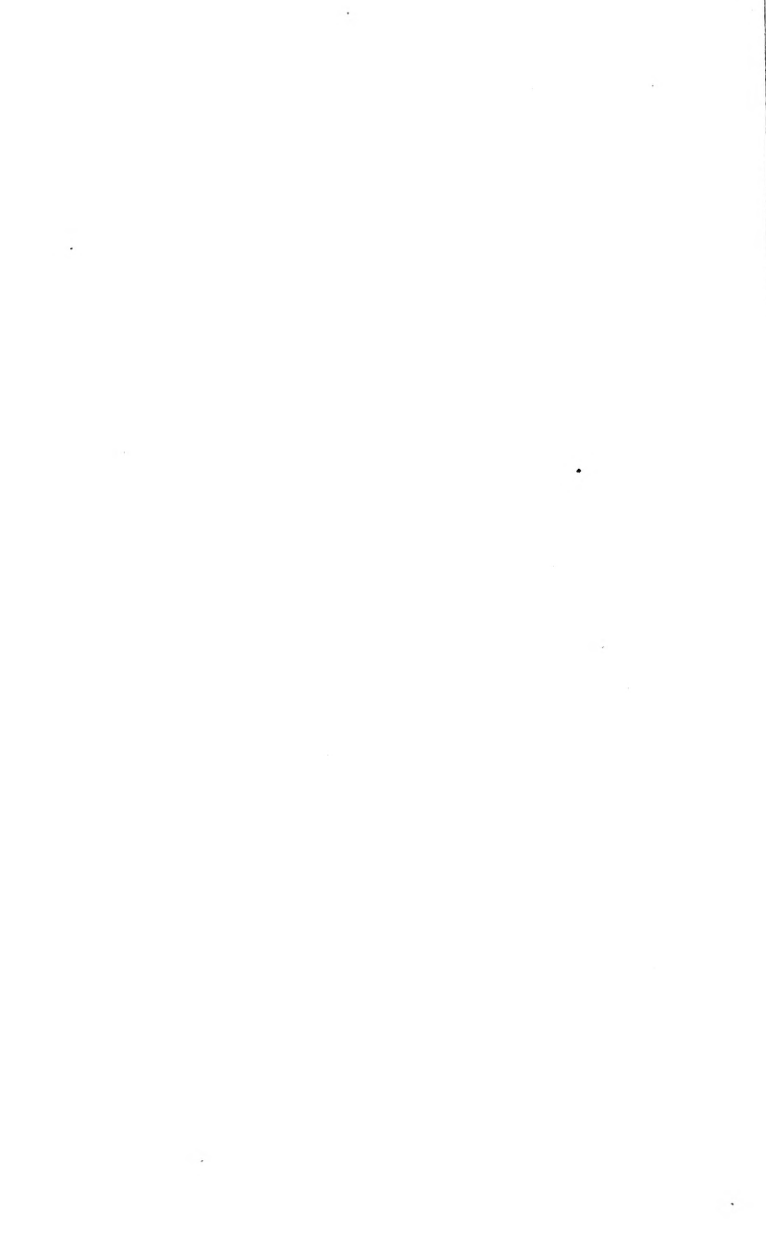


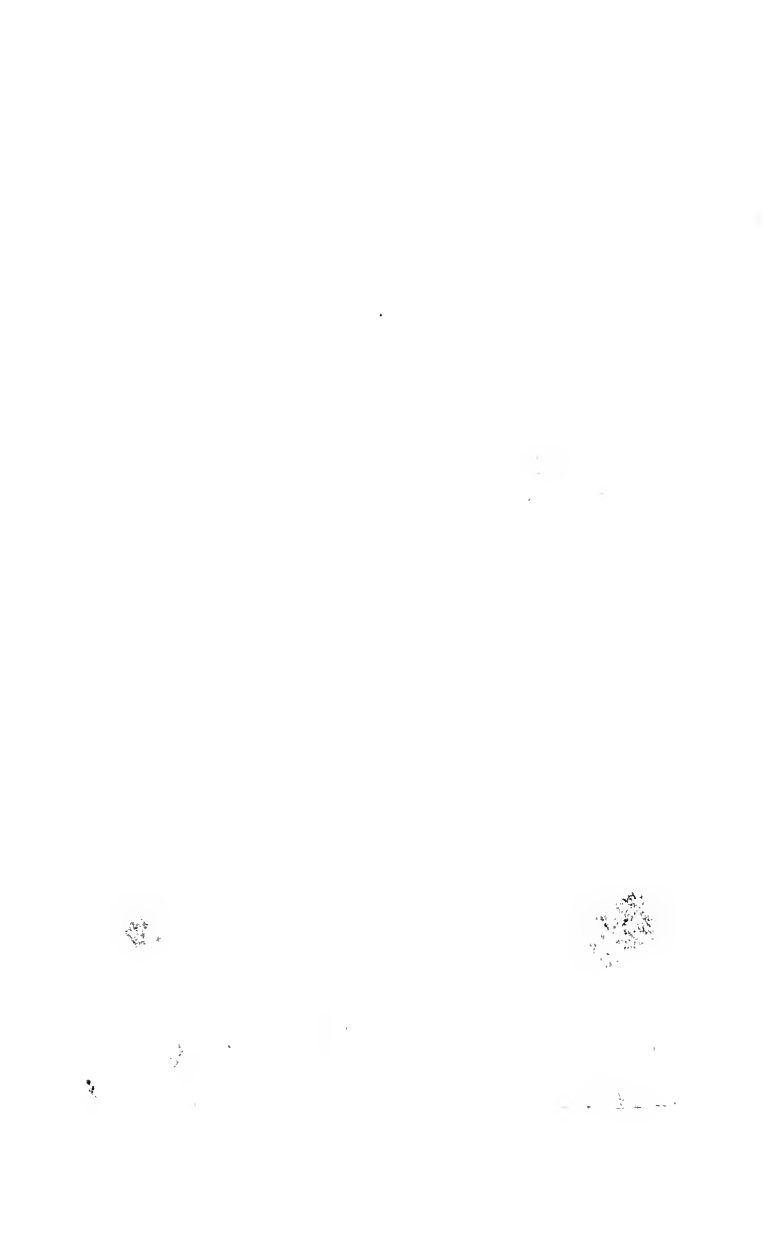
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LOS ANGELES







Alfred Midgley.

Special Subscription Edition.
ILLUSTRATED.



Edited by E. W. H. FOWLES, M.A., LL.B.,
Author of "*Melbourne Fourth*," "*Iterare Cursus*,"
"*The Workers' Compensation Act of 1905*," &c.

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Dedicated to
My Dear Wife and Children.

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Note by the Publishing Committee.

The movement towards the publication of this work began in the strong conviction of the hon. secretary of the Committee that it was highly desirable that Mr. Midgley's poems should be published in book form. On mentioning the matter to several literary friends the secretary was encouraged to attempt an organised effort to accomplish this object.

Through response to circular sent out by Committee, and other efforts, it has been possible to publish an illustrated edition of 1,000 copies, which, after subscribers have been supplied, leaves the remainder for sale to the public at subscription price.

There are many friends of Mr. Midgley who will be glad to have a pleasing volume of his poems in their hands. There are many who, though not knowing him personally, have been helped by his writings which have appeared in the Press of Queensland and elsewhere. They will be glad to possess, in an attractive form, a collection of his verses. Serious illness has for some time rendered Mr. Midgley unable to do any physical work, even that of writing; the Committee hope that this volume will not only be a permanent delight to its author and its readers, but that its publication will result in tangible profit to one whose present circumstances call for practical sympathy.

For the generous, and whole-hearted interest and assistance of those who have helped to carry the movement to its present issue, the Committee feel deeply grateful, and much more especially to the honorary editor of these poems, whose work has so largely contributed to realizing the Committee's hopes.

In securing for Mr. Midgley's poems a place in the book literature of Australia, and in the knowledge that the work is one which will have, and only can have, a good influence upon the minds of those who read it, the Committee have the satisfaction of feeling that their project has not been in vain.

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The Poet and His Works.

Biographical Sketch.

Alfred Midgley, the author of this collection of miscellaneous poems, is a native of Yorkshire. He was born in Leeds, 24th February, 1849. His father and mother were natives of the same town. With the exception of three years of his childhood, spent at a village boarding-school, nearly the whole of the first twenty-one years of his life was spent in Leeds. Some of the incidents of his early years at the village school are described in the verses entitled, "Their Native Village." He received a fair education at several private schools in Leeds, chiefly in Oxford Place Academy, the principal of which was J. K. Dall, B.A. After leaving school he served an apprenticeship with Messrs. Hudswell and Clarke, a firm of engineers. At 16 years of age he became a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. His career as a public speaker commenced at the early age of 18. Then he became a local preacher, and his fluent addresses and very boyish appearance made him rather popular in the surrounding villages.

In 1869 he read some pamphlets describing Queensland as a desirable place for emigrants. Trade was dull, prospects unsatisfactory, the remaining ties of relationship in the old country were few, and so he decided to come out to Queensland. He voyaged to Moreton Bay on the ship "Storm King," and landed in Brisbane in January, 1870. A short time afterwards he obtained employment at his trade in Rockhampton.

While there he offered himself as a candidate for the ministry of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia, and was accepted. His first appointment was the Ipswich Circuit in 1871, where he spent two years. His next ministry was for three years in the Toowoomba

Circuit. While in Toowoomba he married Miss Sarah Elizabeth Vowles, of Newtown, Ipswich. She fell a victim to consumption eleven years afterwards, leaving a son and daughter. In 1876 he was appointed to the Albert Street Circuit, Brisbane. During the third year of his ministry there he resigned his position as a Wesleyan minister.

Having obtained a lease of three years of the right to sell produce by auction at the railway siding, Roma street, Brisbane, he entered on business life and continued in it until 1887. Financial difficulties then overtook him, and from that time till 1902 he was in the employ of several produce firms.

In 1883 he was elected M.L.A. for Fassifern. In 1898 he contested unsuccessfully the Bulimba electorate as a Labour candidate.

In 1873 he published a small volume of poems; and in 1883 compiled, by the authority of the Lands Department, a handbook on Queensland for distribution in England.

In 1886 he married his present wife, who was Miss Sarah Ellen Baron, of Brisbane. There are two sons and four daughters by this marriage.

About six years ago there appeared in his right hand the first symptoms of the malady from which he is now suffering. He has had no stroke; but a creeping paralysis has gradually almost deprived him of the use of his limbs. The loving care and ministration of his wife and children are with him in these months of affliction; they enable him to bear with cheerful patience the frailties of the flesh, while his Christian faith still makes "the will of God his utmost choice."

His Writings.

In the preface to his first volume of poems (published in Toowoomba, 1873) he tells us why he writes and whose praise he sets out to win. It is fairer to judge him by this aim than by any fine standard of "poetry":—

Few mighty deeds my rhymes record,
 Of men who loved to use the sword,
 Or beings of mystic, classic name,
 Of doubtful deeds and doubtful fame—
 Such things for me had ne'er much charm,
 And may not ever;
 I'd rather make your hearts feel warm,
 Than make them shiver.

The pure and good I'll strive to praise,
 The drooping soul I'll try to raise,
 By means which my own soul can feel—
 The cheering word, the kind appeal—
 With simple truths as simply told,
 Thus touch the human
 That lives in breasts of young and old,
 Of man and woman.

The world's applause? I ask it not,
 I'm well contented with my lot!—
 To please the few who know and love me,
 And serve the God who rules above me—
 In these two things my pleasure's blended—
 Much gain in giving,
 And all through life, till it is ended,
 Much joy in living.

Among his earlier poems, written in England, is
 "Ruth," a story of a loving heart—

"Early, bright, transient, chaste as morning dew
 She sparkled, was exhaled, and went to heaven."

"Helen Young," an English Christmas story, was
 written partly in England, partly in Queensland. It is
 a poem of over 800 lines. As an early effort it shows
 considerable power of dramatic description. A brief
 quotation will serve to illustrate the style:—

They reached the Moor, and near the quarries drew;
 Some clouds had gathered and a bleak wind blew;
 Donald was thinking of his gentle bride,
 And she leaned wearily at Donald's side.
 When near the quarries, driving with good heed,
 He drew his reins and checked the eager steed;

They past the first ; between it and the last,
 Close by the road, a pile of stones was cast—
 The broken fragments from the works below,
 But looming now like pyramid of snow.
 And watching from the sheltering shade of these,
 One waiting stood, and when the light he sees,
 Out in a moment, cat-like forth he leapt.
 Muffled and tall before the horse he stepped,
 No threat he used, he made no lawless claim,
 But raised his arm, with sure, deliberate aim,
 And speaking not, pointed at Donald's head—
 A flash—a cry—and the unerring lead
 Laid Donald lifeless on the blood-stained earth !

Mr. Midgley was once asked to write two additional verses to the well-known song, "Thy voice is near me in my dreams" In sweet harmony with the spirit of the original he soon wrote:—

The whisper of thy trusting love, that sweet low voice of thine—
 When first I pressed thee to my heart and fondly called thee mine!
 I hear it still, though years have fled, distinctly as of yore!
 I cannot think of thee as dead, but only "gone before."

Thou wert too fair, by far, for earth! God called thee home to
 heaven!
 The angels wondered such a flower to this bleak world was given!
 But oft I feel thy spirit near, and still I follow thee;
 I hope again thy voice to hear—thy radiant face to see.

He is no pessimist. Hark to his cheerful stirring notes in such poems as "Watchmen, what of the night?" (1st vol. published 1873, p. 56; reprinted in this volume, at page 118).

He wrote some "Lays and Ballads of the Protectorate," taking as his themes the detention of the emigrant ship, the erection of the King's standard at Nottingham (Aug. 23, 1642), and incidents in the battles of those days. "The Death of John Hampden" (see p. 131), shows his sympathetic reading of history.

"Observations of an Observatory," an interesting poem of twenty verses, appeared in the *Boomerang* (an erstwhile Queensland newspaper). The Brisbane Observatory was originally a tread mill, built in convict days by convict labour. For many years a gun was fired from it

every day at 1 o'clock. Mr. Midgley's lines were written shortly after the firing of the gun had been discontinued, and they offer quaint comment on the rapid changes in "men and things." "The Bird of Paradise," is a poem founded on a Swedish legend. "A Dream of Earth and Heaven," is an allegory of much force and insight. Most of these poems appeared in Mr. Midgley's first volume, and it has not been thought necessary to repeat them here. The poems of this volume include the best of his more mature efforts, and so much of his earlier verses as considerations of length and literary merit would allow.

The Editor has added (pp. 140-150) a few notes to the text, in the hope that they will be of service to some readers.



POEMS.

I.—Patriotic.

Queensland.

Whence this wondrous transformation ?
Till of late a silent shore,
Now the home of a young nation,
Growing stronger evermore ;
Busy streets, retreats of leisure,
Solid, shapely homes of men,
Fanes of worship, haunts of pleasure,
Wondrous contrast—now, and then !

Spacious wharves, where ships of nations
Go and come by night and day ;
Wealth of mines, plains, and plantations—
Where as yesterday were they ?
All this loveliness was wasted,
All this world of wealth unknown,
Stored up bounty all untasted,
Treasure-trove to England thrown.

Where are skies more blue and sunny ?
Where such varied wealth and vast ?
Land of corn, and wine, and honey,
By no land on earth surpassed ;
Throwing off each vain tradition,
Free from the Old World's unrest ;
Land of peaceful acquisition,
And in perfect peace possessed.

Own we, gratefully and frankly,
Gathering what the harvest yields,
We are reapers, reaping amply
From a hundred fruitful fields ;

Reaping from historic pages,
 Reaping from the skill of men,
 All the fruits of all the ages,
 Of the platform, plough, and pen.

Pass the oldtime greetings hearty,
 From whatever land we come,
 Of whatever creed or party,
 Some day we shall all be one !
 One in noble emulations,
 One in sympathy as men,
 One in Truth's strong, deep foundations,
 Let us taste what will be then !

And since all life worth the living
 Owns the claims of brotherhood,
 Knows the blessedness of giving,
 Feels the joy of doing good,
 Pray we that heaven's benediction
 On our hearts and homes may rest,
 Spreading wider the conviction,
 Peaceful victories are best.

The Australian's Return.

See yonder, stretching on each hand,
 The coastline of my Native Land ;
 The joy, when leaving thee, was pain
 Compared with my return again ;
 I've seen enough of sullen skies,
 And heard enough of groans and sighs,
 And Old World scenes of want and wrong
 More grateful make my greeting song.

I pledge to thee, dear Native Land,
 Against all foes a helping hand,
 A heart for thee that aught shall dare,
 For thy well-being a daily prayer—
 May heaven's smile rest on thy soil,
 Rewarding skill, requiting toil,
 With flocks, and fruits, and grain, and gold,
 And greater blessings manifold.

And since some limits there must be
 To all of human liberty,
 Be thine so few, and they so small
 As hardly to be felt at all ;
 So small the reverence for might—
 So great the love of truth and right—
 That the grand Golden Rule shall be
 Of each law the epitome.

Still smile triumphant over fears,
 As come and go the changing years,
 And ever rest upon thy face
 Perennial youth, and health, and grace ;
 For thee may joys of motherhood
 Grow greater with thy children's good ;
 Dear Motherland, young, fair and free,
 The happiest land on earth to me.

2.—Poems of Nature.

Mr. Midgley looks out with eyes of love on all nature—the set mountain, the singing stream, the call of the clear throated bird, and the fields yellow to harvest.

“ All things bright and beautiful,
 All creatures great and small,
 All things wise and wonderful,
 The Lord God made them all,”—

this is his doctrine. He looks, too, past nature to nature's God and sweetly reasons, in the old way, that if God so clothes the grass of the field and feeds the young ravens, then He will not forget the children of men. From Nature's beauty and variety and fragrance, and from the sure return of the seasons, and he draws many a lesson of comfort, even as tens of thousands have done since the Sermon on the Mount. As Anstice (1808-1836) says :

“ Yet birds and flowers around us preach,
 And all the present evil teach
 Sufficient for the day.
 Lord, make these faithless hearts of ours
 Such lessons learn from birds and flowers ;

Make them from self to cease,
 Leave all things to a Father's will
 And taste, before Him lying still,
 E'en in affliction, peace."

Mr. Midgley shares with all tender souls the love of flowers—those "unconscious witnesses to the resurrection." To him a primrose by the river's bank is something more than a primrose—it is a smile of God's goodness, and yet a lesson that life is brief. In the final verse of "Flowers" there is a wish that will surely not go unhonored, come the "one clear call" soon or late. Mr. Midgley loves the Australian bush; but his verse is quite free from any ambitious attempts to follow a Gordon or a Kendall. He sees the happier and quieter side—the birth of morning, the gradual cessation of earth's labour at eventide, the peach trees blooming, the slowly descending fall of night—and when the human element enters it is in the picture of some homestead nestling under the mountain's shadow, or some waving field of golden grain. In "A Bush Idyl" the words are often commonplace, but the scene is one that Kings might envy, and lines like

"'Twas money built the cottage walls but mother made the home"
 contain a truth not unworthy of remembrance. The twin poems "Praying for Rain" and "Thanksgiving for Rain" will be not less appreciated in Queensland than elsewhere.

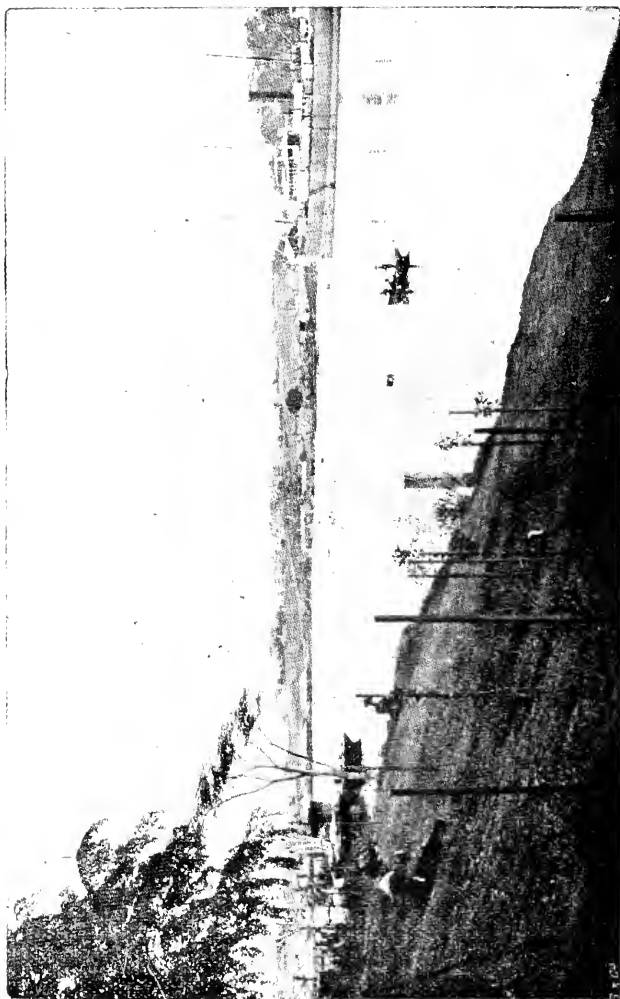
Springtime.

"Thou renewest the face of the earth."—*Ps.* 104. 30.

Lo! once again from darkness and the dust,
 Leaf, blade, and bloom, and nascent grain, and fruit,
 Preach cheerful homilies of humble trust
 In God's sure care, for toiling man and brute.

Earth's kindly fruits His loving kindness tell,
 Rebuke our doubts, and shame away our fears,
 With thoughts of Him who doeth all things well,
 And with His goodness crowns the circling years.

Not all of human skill can form a seed,
 A root, or bulb, or germ, instinct with life;
 Some higher Power anticipates our need
 In pastures green, and blossoms sweet and rife.



"The Canopy O'erhead is Spread, the Carpet for Our Feet."

We see so much of wisdom, and of good,
In common things, that scarce attention claim,
That we may trust, in things not understood,
Pervasive goodness lives and moves the same.

The Wattles are in Bloom Again.

The wattles are in bloom again, the wattles are in bloom,
Woven into the pattern and relieving tints of gloom ;
Each tiny tufted floweret, in yellow blanket rolled,
Braving the blustering westerlies, and nights of nipping
cold.

The wattles are in bloom again, the wattles are in bloom,
I brought a spray with me to-day, its scent pervades my
room ;
With a fragrance reminiscent of fields of new-mown hay,
And hedgerows of Old England, white with the flowers
of May.

The wattles are in bloom again, Oh ! may their bloom-
ing bring
To stricken hearts, that solace need, some gracious com-
forting :
For those whose eyes, since last they bloomed, have
closed on all below,
And opened, as they humbly hope, where fairer flowers
grow.

Man does not live by bread alone ; and other wants to
meet,
The canopy o'erhead is spread, the carpet for our feet ;
And things of beauty numberless nourish each subtle
sense
Of better things as yet unseen, and grateful reverence.

These wattle blooms, and all things else, that have no
 innate thought,
 But true to time, and tint, and taste, are to perfection
 brought,
 In them, as in the firmament, His handiwork appears,
 Who first the floral dial planned, that marks the circling
 years.

“Coo-ee,” Boys, “Coo-ee.”

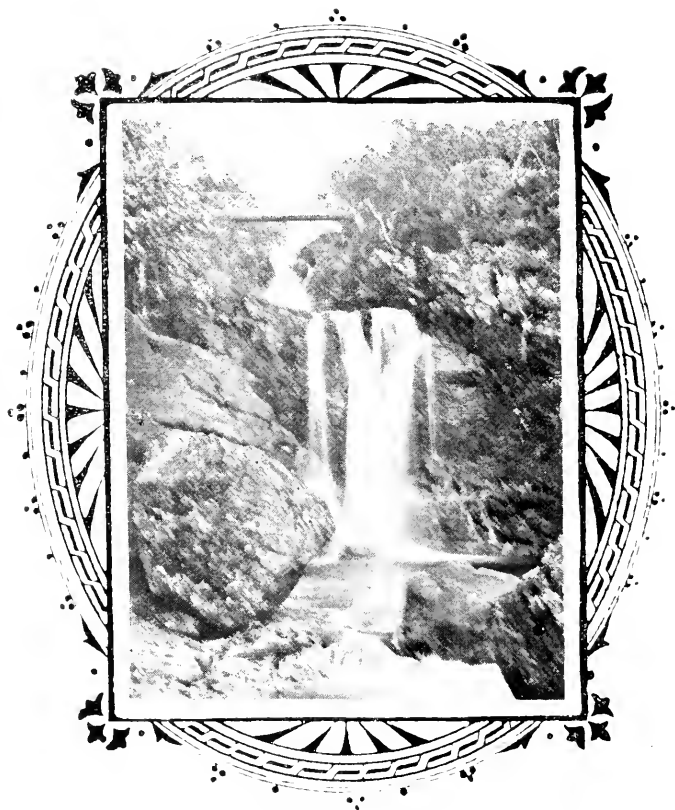
“Coo-ee,” boys, “coo-ee,” clear as a musket crack,
 And like a stockman’s whip the ridges echo back,
 Solitude is startled with the sudden cry,
 And from hungry workers comes answer in reply—
 “Coo-ee, Coo-ee.”

“Coo-ee,” boys, “coo-ee,” ’tis mother at the door,
 Calling us to supper in cheery tones once more ;
 The patient, plodding teams, from the plough released,
 Wend homewards, cogitating on their coming feast.
 “Coo-ee, Coo-ee.”

“Coo-ee,” boys, “coo-ee,” the milkers leave the yard,
 Calves are loudly bleating, the pigs are grunting hard,
 The sep’rator’s monotone to them must music seem :
 There’s bacon in the milk, boys, money in the cream.
 “Coo-ee, Coo-ee.”

“Coo-ee,” boys, “coo-ee,” the sun is sinking low,
 And deeper, and darker, fantastic shadows grow.
 Hunger gives good relish, where good fare is found,
 And the rest and sleep of labour, are sweet and sound.
 “Coo-ee, Coo-ee.”

Sometimes mother, in her quiet, gentle way,
 Says, “Boys, it will be grand, when comes life’s closing
 day,
 To hear across the river the Master’s call,
 And find there’s room, and rest, and welcome for us all—
 ‘Come home, Come home!’”



"The Sylvan Nook."

A Beauty Spot.

Congenial shrine of solitude,
Of rural rest and shade,
Where through the trees the minstrel breeze
Sings softly on its way,
And slanting gleams of sunset beams
Just peep at close of day.

Few sounds are here, but twittering birds
Know well this sylvan nook,
They know no fear, but low and clear
Repeat some brief refrain ;
Or thrilling notes, from throbbing throats,
Ring loud and clear again.

Fair fronds of fern and velvet moss,
Mantle each bole and crag,
And all around, where on the ground
The old tree roots are seen,
The green grass springs, and round them clings
Their ruggedness to screen.

A few flowers live their lives away
In this secluded spot,
And human eye doth seldom spy
Their modest loveliness ;
So like the lives whose love survives
Neglect and loneliness.

'Tis good when all around is fair,
And all within is peace,
To let the soul, free from control,
On pleasing fancies dwell ;
While memory strays, and bygone days
Renew their magic spell.

Flowers.

Or wreathed around the young bride's head,
Or love's last tribute to the dead,
Reminders of our happiest days,
Mementos of our days of gloom ;
With us through all life's devious ways
From cradle onward to the tomb ;
But symbols now of things to be
They speak another tongue to me.

For so to me it now appears
Their meaning changes with the years,—
And what were signs of things of earth,
A deeper, richer meaning bear,
Than love, or hate, or grief, or mirth,
Than earth-bound hope, or earth-born fear ;
When all these things have ceased to be
They tell of better things to me.

If friend of mine should wish to grace
With flowers my final resting place,
My wish would be that first and chief
Red blooms of sacrifice may show,
And with them, and in strong relief,
Rich golden hues of Mercy glow ;—
For without these, white flowers would be
Unmeaning as applied to me.

A Bush Grave.

Near a coach-track, still and lonely,
Underneath a sheltering tree,
Marked with rough initials only—
Whose, I wonder, can it be ?

Wild birds hush their songs and laughter,
Swaying in the morning breeze ;
Wondering what I am after,
Parrots watch from lofty trees.

In the night, when earth is sleeping,
Wonga pigeons coo and call,
While the stars are vigils keeping,
Or the moon illumines all.

Shadows 'neath the whispering branches
Move in the fantastic light,
Startling with weird phantom fancies,
Lonely pilgrims of the night.

Nothing calmed by sudden wailing
Of the curlew's mournful cry,
Or the harsh horse bells revealing
Unknown strangers camping nigh.

Who, I wonder, and what was he,
Buried in this rough-fenced grave ?
Trooper, drover, or it may be
Some explorer restless, brave.

Or intrepid miner seeking
Spot of rumoured hidden wealth,
Speared, when in his blanket sleeping,
Smitten down by savage stealth.

Starved, or sick, or thirst—distracted,
Meeting an untimely fate,
In some purpose not effected,
Or some service to the State.

Fain I trust, O silent sleeper,
Some bright memories from the past,
And a consolation greater,
Soothed and cheered thee at the last.

The Fruitless Flowers.

Sometimes, in quiet meditative hours,
I wonder why God made so many flowers—
That never change to nut, or grain or fruit,
For food for man, or mute dependent brute.

To them the birds to satisfy their needs
Come not, in quest of nectar or of seeds ;
Gregarious flocks and herds unheeding pass—
Marvels of beauty, in the trees and grass.

The blossoms of the orange, peach, or plum,
Are harbingers of ripened fruits to come ;
The unpretentious bloom upon the vine,
Is herald of the coming grapes and wine.

But roses, lilies, flowers of sun or shade,
Of every form and tint, why were they made ?
Of their own charms they have no consciousness,
Of perfumed breath, and graceful loveliness.

Festooned o'erhead or peeping from the sod,
They seem the pleasant afterthoughts of God,
Remembering that man when clothed and fed,
Has other needs than raiment and than bread.

Do not the things of beauty, such as these,
A purpose serve, if serving but to please ?
We imitate their Maker, when to grace
Our ample boards, we flowers on them place.

And more they teach : where deeds perforce are few,
These flowers are like compassion deep and true,
Like loving look, and cheery pleasant smile,
That serve sometimes some sorrow to beguile.

Peach Blossoms in May

There must be some mistake, it is not spring,
But here and there the trees are blossoming ;
In pink and red, or pink and white tints blended,
They seem to think the winter-time is ended :
Like little ones that waken ere the dawning,
And think the moonlight in the room is morning.

Early matured in floral maidenhood,
They venture forth in jocund hardihood ;
As if ashamed of garb that seems desponding,
To coaxing warmth and tender dew's responding,
In vernal beauty fresh, and bright, and winsome,
They come as those who know their coming welcome.

They trouble not as we who toil and spin,
But open wide to let the sunshine in,
And seem to say in flowery language whispers,
"Jack Frost is gone," to their still sleeping sisters,
"Come don you blouses, and your new spring bonnets,
The bees are humming all their latest sonnets."

To me these buds and blossoms bring to mind
Those spirits bright that ready pretexts find—
For smiles, and words, and deeds of gracious cheering,
And leave us longing for their re-appearing ;
Those sanguine souls that always have a reason
For trust and hope, in every time and season.

Morning.

The eastward stars fade in the dawning light,
And one by one they vanish with the night ;
No motion felt, nor heard the slightest sound
As half the world into the light rolls round ;
A new day comes, with heraldry sublime,
Fresh, fair and young, as the firstborn of time.

The birds begin to prune their rested wings,
New joy in life each radiant morning brings—
The flowers, refreshed, with laughter in their eyes,
Their incense blend with feathered minstrelsies ;
And He who gently doth our care condemn,
With trust renewed bids us consider them.

All through the night the surf upon the shore,
As if in pain, was moaning evermore,
Sobbing as those who linger o'er their dead,
And will not leave them or be comforted ;
But now the wavelets of the sparkling sea,
Like little children clap their hands with glee.

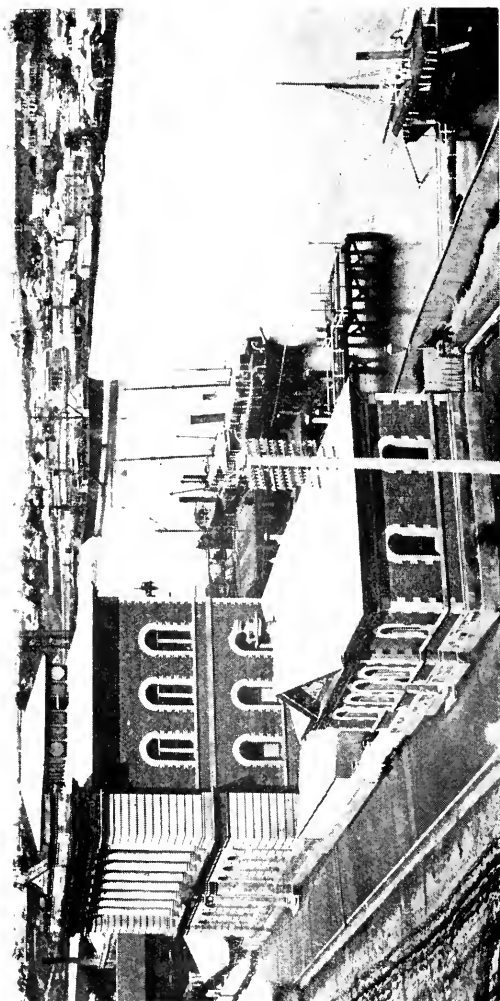
The glad new day, like millions gone before,
Sheds heavenly glory over sea and shore,
And suffering ones that could not sink to sleep,
And watching ones that loving vigils keep,
Less lonely feel than through the weary night,
And thank God for the morning air and light.

The Shortest Day.

Once more the ebb has ceased o'er Austral lands,
Of the great tide of solar heat and light ;
The Cosmos vast, controlled by unseen hands,
Now re-adjusts the hours of day and night.

Unerring and unceasing year by year,
The world rolls round in its perpetual race,
Showing no signs of wasting, or of wear,
From threefold motion through the realms of space.

The ceaseless whirl that brings the night and day,
The yearly circuit of the central sun—
The never-ending, oscillating sway—
Causing the seasons in their constant run.



"To City Wharves and Shipping Waiting There."

What are the riddles through long ages solved,
 Compared with these, to science fathomless ?
 How at the first those myriad orbs revolved—
 And still revolve, we cannot even guess.

Nor how the sun burns unconsumed by day,
 The tidal changes with the changing moon ;
 Nor how the planets in their pathless way
 Move to the moment, never late nor soon.

Awed and amazed we ask, and what is man ?
 And still the sower goeth forth to sow ;
 God's care for us in all this wondrous plan,
 The summer fruits and harvest sheaves will show.

Suburban Eventide.

From the great city sounds of factory bells,
 Borne on the breeze, proclaim the hour of five,
 And each shrill whistle in succession tells
 The day's work done in busy human hive.

Adown the river on the ebbing tide
 The throb of steam-tug vibrates on the air,
 With steady speed the tug and coal punt glide,
 To city wharves and shipping waiting there.

From a new house, being built, through all the day,
 The village rang with noise from roof and walls,
 Now sound of saw and hammer dies away,
 And wonted quiet on the hamlet falls.

A group of lads are shouting on the green,
 Football as yet is life's supremest good ;
 I think of mates and mirth that once have been,
 And music lingers in the well-known thud.

A flock of parrots, garrulous, and shrill,
 Sweep swift o'erhead, after their daily quest,
 Seeking, as soon all sentient creatures will,
 Through dark still hours a refuge and a rest.

Night.

Gently the evening shadows fell,
As fall, each fleeting year,
The tokens and the signs which tell
The night of life draws near.

Now overhead—as o'er the sea
Ships sail to compass true—
The grand celestial galaxy
Moves through the boundless blue.

In orbits so immensely vast,
Ages may wing their flight
Ere yet again in space is past
The spot they pass to-night.

Not God alone, but time and space
We fail to comprehend ;
How there can be no further place,
Or time begin or end.

All powerless is human thought
To picture nothingness ;
And soon to impotence are brought
Thoughts of infiniteness.

Heights so sublime, depths so profound,
We cannot sound or soar ;
Our limitations close us round,
And baffle evermore.

In simple trust I bow my head,
Content to leave it so,
Believing He knows best who said—
“ No further shalt thou go.”

Praying for Rain.

"When the heaven is shut up and there is no rain, because they have sinned against Thee; yet if they pray toward this place, and confess Thy name, and turn from their sin when Thou dost afflict them: Then hear Thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy servants, and of Thy people Israel. When Thou hast taught them the good way, wherein they should walk; and send rain upon Thy land, which Thou hast given unto Thy people for an inheritance."

Shall we restrain our humble prayers to God,
And bear our ills with sullen apathy?
Shall we deny His right to use the rod,
And scorn to ask His pitying sympathy?
Is He "Our Father," wise above our thought,
Or have we falsely trusted and been taught?

Can it be right to pray for daily bread,
And vain and wrong to ask for needful rain?
If clouds drop not their fatness from o'erhead,
How can there be the ripened golden grain?
God works by means, in giving what is good,
And rain must fall, or fails our daily food.

Mute in their pain, in speechless helplessness,
In time of drought, dumb creatures die of thirst,
Of all faith's tests, their suffering and distress,
Some good men find the hardest and the worst;
And may not we, who use them in our need,
In their behalf for mercy intercede?

False is the test of those who say they trust,—
And turn to God the last instead of first;
Consuming gifts in gratifying lust,
Their God is but a fetish, blest, or curst,
Which they set up, or cast down with a sneer—
If the response is not both prompt and clear.

"Science," and "reason," and "material laws,"
Can never silence man's dependent cry;
It only needs some strong constraining cause,—
And it breaks forth and pleads appealingly;
And how our wish affects the higher Will,
We cannot tell, but trust it is so still.

Thanksgiving for Rain.

Good to our sight, or good in some disguise,
Are all Thy gifts, or their withholding, Lord,
Sometimes the good is seen through tear-dimmed eyes,
Sometimes with laughter of a glad surprise—
We watch Thy purposes unfolding, Lord.

Great was our need, and what had we to bring,
To claim Thy notice, or Thy favour win?
To Thee belongeth every living thing,
We give but Thine in our thankoffering,
And trust alone the offering for sin.

And if it pleases Thee to hear our cry,
Contrite and helpless, in our dire distress,
And if it pleases Thee to send reply
In showers of blessings from a clouded sky,
Will thankful praises serve to please Thee less?

Ah! it was good to see the gentle rain,
More free, and copious, and insistent grow,
Music it made on roof and window-pane,
We watched Thy footstool growing green again,
And felt our hearts with thankfulness o'erflow.

The Miserable Crow.

What a voice! it sounds like a grindstone
That has not been turned for a year,
Or the notes of some hurdy-gurdy
With bronchial tubes out of gear;
And he needs must croak out his discord
High up in the loftiest tree,
As if possessed of the notion
That he a good singer must be.

While birds that sing sweetly are trying
To shame him, and make him be still,
Attuned to the joyance of morning,
They warble, and whistle, and trill ;
Or in merry ablutions together
They plunge, and they splash, and they skim,
And laughingly ask one another—
“ Oh, what is the matter with him ! ”

What a coat ! for a land of sunshine,
Where even the winter months are
Brighter and better than summer time,
In lands in some regions afar ;
The same sombre suit ever wearing,
All day both abroad and at home,
As doleful as Poe's ancient raven,
Reminding of death and the tomb.

And every sense he possesses,
His hearing, and smelling, and sight,
Finds pleasure in things that are gruesome,
A charnel-house is his delight ;
His black wings go flapping like hearse-plumes,
Wherever the young weaklings are.
And his evil eye soon catches sight of
The dead or the dying afar.

But there now ! I may be maligning ;
All this may be part of his trade,
And scavenging, carrion and garbage,
May just be for what he is made ;
To tell you the truth, I was musing
And thinking of many things when
A croaking black crow near a stockyard
Suggested analogous men.

And the semblance seemed nearly perfect
To the churl, the brutal, and base,
The morbidly-minded, and dismal—
With frowning and fiddle-long face ;
But there's this important distinction :
In his habits, and tastes, and trade,
The bird crow is what nature made him,
But the human crow is self-made.

The Hustling Westerlies.

The sunshine and the showers strove to deck the earth
again
With herbage, and foliage, and garlands of gay flowers ;
Sought to make the land rejoice with exultant mirth
again,
But it seemed a hopeless task for the sunshine and the
showers.

For the hustling westerlies swept o'er the valleys and the
hills,
And all fresh and fair young life shrank from their
withering breath,
Parched up with heat that scorched them, or nipped by
sudden chills,
Unnumbered things of beauty died a premature death.

And, like them, human hustlers often work a world of
harm,
The sensitive and the tender shrink from their clumsy
touch.
And they find nothing helpful, nothing to cheer them or
to charm,
In hustlers, who in all things are "business-like" too
much.

Oh hustlers ! Take time to eat, to laugh, to rest, and
soundly sleep !
With all your getting seek to gain the joy of those that
give.
What use this endless sowing if men may never reap ?
And what is the best of livings that leave no time to live.

Take care, the children's childhood days will soon come
to an end,
And the care bestowed upon them will tell through
future years,
While the brusque, and harsh, and hard, who the little
ones offend,—
Begrudging smiles, may, all too late, shed unavailing
tears.

Take the hint, when sometimes counting the years that
may remain,
You start to find how few, at most, their number now
must be,
And to beautify the earth be as sunshine and the rain,
And cease to be akin to the hustling westerly.

A Seaside Reminiscence.

The sun his long day's march had ended,
And the pleasant twilight hours—
Peace, and rest, and worship blended,
Song of birds, and scent of flowers.

But an undertone of sadness,
As I sat beside the sea,
Mingled with the notes of gladness,
That the breezes brought to me.

For the wavelets seemed complaining,
Stealing o'er the sandy beach,
Seemed intent upon regaining
Some lost treasures out of reach.

Then I all intently listened
To each old, familiar song,
Borne from where the moonlight glistened,
Sung by happy youthful throng.

Sailing, singing, laughing, dreaming,
Strong, and brave, and young and fair,
Knowing little of the meaning,
Of life's suffering and care.

Who, I mused, would mar such gladness,
Who would change your smiles to tears,
Who would bid you think in sadness,
Of the prose of future years?

Sing on, sing on, in lively measure,
Sighs will come in time, good sooth,
Give memory some shells to treasure,
Won from bright flood tide of youth.

3.—Poems of the Home.

Love of children, tender solicitude for old age, playful fancies about common things, and a subtle constant sympathy with the struggles, the hopes and the fears of a working household—these are the features that shine through many of Mr. Midgley's poems. He does not sing of the splendours of a palace, or the luxuries of wealthy idleness. "Give me neither poverty nor riches" is the golden mean which he would seek, and so he sings—

"Of all things needful for this life we have sufficient share,
Not near enough for indolence, but far too much for care."

Home is the earthly paradise, and it is made not by costly furniture and wide domains, but by sweet faces and loving hearts. In many of Mr. Midgley's poems he draws, with a few phrases, the picture of the happy fireside—the verses in this section will show how he delights in his theme. The opening "Lullaby" almost sings itself to music; "Granny's Specs." is imperfect in style, but every line of it rings true to human feeling; "A Bit of Maize" and "A Bush Idyll" are homely enough rhymings—almost colloquial; but there is a sense of content and innocent joy in them that is not always found in far statelier numbers.

A Mother's Lullaby.

By-by baby, all in white,
By-by baby, sweet good-night.
Sweet good-night.

Close those laughing, bright blue eyes,
All day full of sweet surprise,
Sweet surprise.

And if dreams should come to thee,
Bright and pleasant may they be,
May they be.

So that on thy smiling face,
Angel whispers we may trace,
We may trace.

And thy waking may it be,
Full of joy to thee and me,
Thee and me.

And each day increase the bliss,
That thrills through me with thy kiss,
With thy kiss.

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Sleeping, waking, bless our child,
Bless our child.

Widowhood.

The first astir at early morning light,
The last astir when all else were asleep,
And only in the watches of the night
Yielding to grief, and finding time to weep.

Her wealth of love they learned too late to prize,
Nor had discernment on her face to see—
The look of longing when her wistful eyes
Mutely appealed for filial sympathy.

She pined away like flowers deprived of light,
In loveless, jovless, daily, dull routine ;
And all could see, and judge the cause aright,
Save those who should most vigilant have been.

She passed away, and then they knew their loss,
And tribute paid in touching paragraph,
And costly flowers of spotless wreath and cross,
And sculptured stone, and scripture epitaph.

Ah ! what avail such mural tributes now ?
The eyes are closed, the tears of grief unseen ;
A loving kiss upon her careworn brow,
In days gone by, would better far have been.

Orphanhood.

"Made orphan by a winter shipwreck."

Dear pensive child, so early called to know
Life's greatest grief, and bear so large a part ;
We wonder not that frequent tears still show
The desolation of her lonely heart.

She misses every morn her dad's caressings,
And playful toying of each wavy curl ;
And every night her mother's prayers for blessings,
And good night kisses to her darling girl.

And it is hard to her to comprehend—
They never more her joys and griefs will share.
That death has brought to a perpetual end
Their gentle nurture, and their tender care.

If she such wealth of love had never known,
The contrast in her eyes less sad had been ;
She learns, too soon, with others older grown,
Our greatest joys oft make our griefs more keen.

So we forgive her when we hear her sigh,
And note her heart is not in scenes of mirth ;
Smiles, love, and joys may come as years roll by,
But now her sorrow shadows all the earth.

Granny's Specs.

A pair of most precious relics,
Worth more than their framework of gold,
Bequeathed to me as a keepsake,
Which shall be, when I am grown old,
Passed down as a prized family heirloom,
As long as together they hold.

How often they used to sparkle,
With a sympathetic joy,
When, with a kiss, she would welcome
Her bright, laughing, mischievous boy,
But soon had to close, and take from her nose
Her treasure—his coveted toy.

Wonderful specs that always seemed
To diminish the cares of age ;
Indispensable help they gave
In perusing the sacred page ;
They seemed, as they shone on her saintly face—
Things venerable, thoughtful, and sage.

Patient specs, in seasons of joy,
When the glad tears would overflow,
Naively she used to blame them thus—
Not wishing such weakness to show,
She would say, as she rubbed them with her gown,
“What’s wrong with these spectacles now.”

And I remember the time when
The eyes they had aided grew bright,
Catching a glimpse of the glory
From that land where there is no night—
That better land, where all tears wiped away,
Age comes not, nor dimness of sight.

A Wedding Wish.

Written for a friend, to accompany some useful wedding gifts.

My homely presents, as you see,
Are things of plain utility ;
Not gifts of jewels rich and rare,
But articles of kitchen-ware.

And with them take the heart-felt wish,
That many a sweet and savoury dish,
Through long and happy years to come,
May not be lacking in your home.

For a young wife, howe'er good-looking,
Fares none the worse if good at cooking,
Who loves her for her own dear sake,
Loves none the less if she can bake.

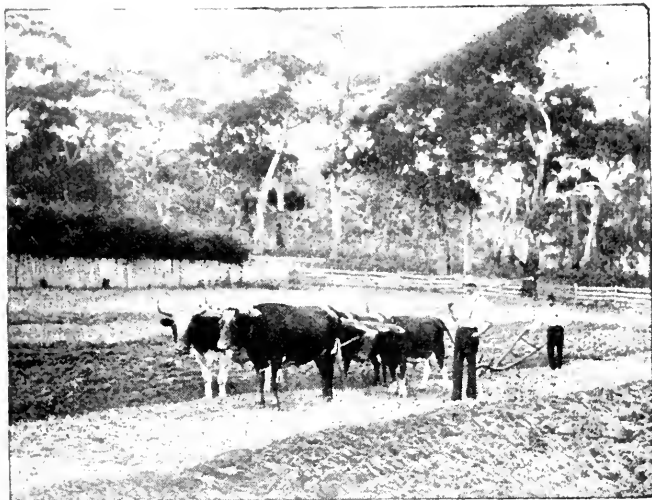
But be the dishes hot or cold,
Or be they few or manifold,
May peace, and love, and sweet content,
Make every meal a sacrament.

A Bit of Maize.

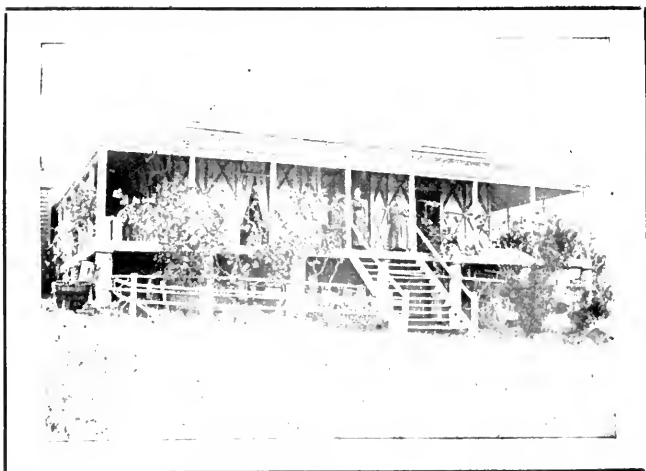
When first the settler in the scrub, or on good forest
land,
With a brave heart, and brawny arms, his clearing takes
in hand,
He rightly thinks, for man and horse, in early struggling
days,
Corn comes the first, and wisely he puts in a bit of
maize.

He takes to other things in time, to lucerne, cane, or
wheat,
But his dumb partners, like himself, must have some-
thing to eat ;
He thinks of them and feeds them well, because he finds
it pays,
To let his team, morn, noon and night, put in a bit of
maize.

And not his team alone, but he, finds it is wholesome
fare
Made into meal, and mixed with milk, and cooked with
wifely care ;
With or without the ham and eggs, that come with bet-
ter days,—
'Tis good in winter mornings to put in a bit of maize.



" He Puts in a Bit of Maize."



" A Pretty Cottage Away Back from the Track."

And when at last the struggling years to easier years
give place,
The waving corn is dear to him as a familiar face ;
And true to his old friend, and shy of each new-fangled
craze,
Whatever else he misses, he puts in a bit of maize.

Emblem of sturdy strength, in dark and healthy green,
Emblem of toil's reward, when tasselled cobs are seen ;
And when the well-saved golden grain is loaded on the
drays,
Emblem of more home comforts, is the farmer's bit of
maize.

A Bush Idyl.

Did you see a pretty cottage away back from the track,
With flower garden in the front, and orchard at the
back ?
The garden gay with flowers, and the blossoms on the
trees—
Alive with honey-hunters from a dozen hives of bees.

That's where we live : I took good care when I the
means possessed,
To build for those I loved so well a comfortable nest,
As cheerful, neat, and roomy, as I thought it ought to
be—
For those who shared in up-hill years the old slab hut
with me.

Did you see a matron sewing on the veranda cool,
And see her kiss two little maids when they come home
from school,
Then with a look I know so well, in eyes of softest
brown,
Gaze down the road, and long to see me coming back
from town ?

Ah ! if I tried to tell you all that she has been to me,
Though lips refrained your eyes might smile in incredulity ;
But I often tell my boys, when we together roam—
'Twas money built the cottage walls, but mother made the home.

Yes, we have three banana boys, supple and tall and strong ;
I've been with hay to town to-day, and I've been rather long,
But they know just what to do whenever I'm away,
And work that fags me now a bit, but seems to them as play.

And our Jack can plough a furrow now, smart and straight and neat,
And at riding, breaking, branding, Bob would be hard to beat ;
While our Larry, laughing Larry, the youngest of the three,
Takes most delight in garden work, and so takes after me.

We all work hard, but all the same avoiding the mistake
Of sacrificing greater good for sordid savings' sake ;
Of all things needful for this life we have sufficient share,
Not near enough for indolence, but far too much for care.

I hear the stockwhips cracking, and old Towser's honest bark,
Good-bye, the days are getting short, and it will soon be dark ;
Yes, I'll tell them that I met the new minister to-day,
And that you'll call and see us all, next time you come this way.

Twenty-one.

(To a young friend on his coming-of-age.)

Dear Dick, I wish with heart sincere
 A voyage long and pleasant ;
 A good fair breeze, skies bright and clear,
 And everything that makes life dear,
 Grow greater from the present.

Your father's friend is growing old,
 But he is your friend too,
 And better things than gems and gold,
 And better blessings manifold,
 He hopes are waiting you.

If prospered in your herds and soil,
 In basket and in store,
 Be generous to the sons of toil,
 Nor let your good on them recoil,
 In evils great and sore.

Live so that when old age shall come,
 And life has reached its ending,
 A better heirship may be won,
 And God and men shall say "Well done!"
 Good stewardship commending.

A Living Sacrifice.

She was her father's darling,
 His only child was she,
 And oft he pressed her to his breast,
 So fond of her was he ;
 She was so like her mother,
 Whom she remembered not,
 Whose spirit rare, and face so fair—
 He never had forgot.

She honoured and she loved him,
And revered his grief,
And did not spare, in tender care,
To give his heart relief
From sorrow that had shadowed,
His faith, his life, his soul ;
When, at the last, his mind o'ercast,
She gently could control.

But many years he lingered,
His mind alone diseased,
Him like a child, she oft beguiled
With little things that pleased ;
And sometimes suitors sought her,
To whom she answered, nay :
With none to share her toil and care,
Her young years passed away.

And when at last God took him,
Her sight was growing weak,
And cheek and brow were wrinkled now ;
No lover came to seek
Her hand, and heart, and ask her
To be his love-crowned queen ;
She loved her task, nor thinks to ask,
Has her life wasted been ?

Florence.

Such loveliness adorned her face,
Such hues of perfect health,
Her form was fashioned with such grace,
So ample was her wealth—
We never thought the flowers which she
Had planted in the spring,
By other hands would gathered be,
For graveside offering.

Oft was her voice attuned to song,
Her vocal gifts were rare,
With tender tones, or sweet and strong,
She soothed, and banished care ;
We little thought her little bird
Within its cage would trill,
When her dear voice no more was heard—
For ever hushed and still.

But she was more than fair to see,
And more than good to hear,
One of those saintly souls was she
That briefly sojourn here ;
We should have thought, for years to come
Her mission here would be
To brighten many a shadowed home
With Christ-like sympathy.

Smiles, words, and songs, we miss them sore,
And filial tenderness ;
Our eyes turn to the opening door,
To greet her and to bless ;
But we have thought the love that gave
The same love took away ;
And with this trust we leave her grave
And homeward take our way.

A Young Capitalist.

He bears a name his father bore,
Unsullied by a deed of shame,
A synonym upon his door
Of sterling worth his sign became ;
And grace and favour he has won,
Because he is his father's son.

His mother lives, for him to pray,
For wisdom, guidance and restraint,
Blending before him every day,
The best of motherhood and saint ;
As one by one loved ones depart,
Her love for him fills all her heart.

Well balanced brain, sound organs, free
From ante-natal taint or lack,
No bane of base heredity—
To hold him down, and keep him back ;
An Absalom in form and face,
Without his bias to disgrace.

Erect, and strong, in perfect health,
Test perfect every limb and sense,
Potentialities of wealth—
Part of his great inheritance—
Are hands, and eyes, and thought, and speech,
Of greater worth than gold can reach.

All noble thoughts of noble men,
All rights and liberties blood-bought,
All peaceful victories of the pen,
All good by evolution wrought,
All these, if rightly understood,
May make him great, should make him good.

And O ! the ample dower of years,
The lease that fifty years may last,
Not called to count through useless tears
The units left, the decades past ;
In all things that real riches be,
A young capitalist is he.

And will he wise or foolish be ?
A prudent man or spendthrift prove ?
Will those who watch his future see
Degrading lusts, or growing love
Of truth and right ; from youth to age
True to his goodly heritage ?

And a Little Child Shall Lead Them.

Were you in haste to leave us, little one,
That naught availed our love and care and grief?
And were you glad ahead of us to run—
Your sojourn with us was too bright and brief?

And could there be a greater love than ours,
Or safer shelter than our lowly home,
Or eyes more watchful while you gathered flowers
With eager hands, wherever you might roam?

If so, then you are safe and blessed indeed,
For all we have, we would for you have given,
With willing toil, and word, and look, and deed—
Have made your life akin to that of heaven.

Naught in the past to grieve o'er or regret;
Nor in the future to shrink from or fear;
The worst of death—the things we would forget—
You never knew while you were with us here.

And you, a little child, have led the way
Through sombre shades we sometimes fain would
shun;
And all the mystery has passed away,—
Which greater grows as years the longer run.

Once more, good-bye, and one more lingering kiss;
Your little feet have made the path more plain;
And though our darling we shall sorely miss—
You have not lived, and died so soon, in vain.

An Infant of Days.

They brought his daughter's child to him,
A babe a few days old,
His eyes with more than age were dim—
With feelings manifold;

For he who stands where he can see
Life's way from first to last,
However bright his hopes may be,
Oft lingers o'er the past.

With old-time tenderness and skill,
He nursed a child once more,
And thought of what of good or ill,
The future held in store ;
All the vicissitudes of years,
Like his three-score and ten,
And grief, and penitential tears,
The common lot of men.

Then, like a solemn sacrament,
With kiss and fond caress—
The grey-haired head was lowly bent
To supplicate and bless ;
One hand he raised, and one did place
Upon the infant's head,
And gazing on the upturned face,
With quivering lips he said—

“ I bless the child, yet what avails
What I may fondly say ?
But intercession still prevails,
They wish the best who pray ;
Great God and Father of us all,
Whate'er his lot may be,
In sunshine, and when shadows fall,
May he remember Thee.

“ So that when cord, and bowl and wheel,
Long use has served to harm,
And dimness o'er the eyes shall steal,
And music cease to charm ;
An inner sense, a deeper sense,
Shall know, and feel, and see,
The compensating recompense ;—
Remembered, Lord, by Thee.”

That Thy Days May be Long.

"Honour thy father and thy mother."—Exod. 20 : 12.

Once so erect and strong in every limb,
See how the years have bowed and broken him ;
He thought of thee through all his manhood's prime,
And sought for thee a more congenial clime,
Leaving a land of life severe and hard,
Where sire to son bequeathed the poor reward
Of hopeless toil, insufferably sad ;
Devoid of all to make thy advent glad.

"Behold thy mother," dim now in her sight,
For through long days, and far into the night,
With scanty means, and many wants to meet,
Her loving labour never seemed complete ;
And by thy bed on lowly bended knee,
Herself forgetting oft she prayed for thee,
And nought for thee was deemed too much to ask,
Nor aught for thee, a burden or a task.

Say not : "It is a gift, from duty free,
If now you should reap benefit by me,"
Dare not by word, or deed, to treat them ill,
Honour them both, it is the Father's will ;
They each have had for thee an ample share
In years gone by of toil and tears and care,
And it should not an irksome duty be
To cherish them who did so much for thee.

My Benjamin.

Closed eyelids hide each sweet forget-me-not,
Hushed for awhile the music of thy voice ;
Sleep soundly, loved one, in thy curtained cot,
And in thy sleep and dreams smile and rejoice ;
Dream of the day gone by, the day to come,
Smile in remembrance of each fond caress,
Live o'er again the daytime life of home,
Live to be blest and loved, to love and bless.

So potently benign thy dawning life
To influence mine, inspire or restrain,
Giving new courage, nerving for the strife,
Making me young in heart and hope again,
'Tis rest to me to gaze on thy repose,
It strengthens me to know thy helplessness.
And arms me thrice against all coming foes,
To note thy innocence and tenderness.

What are my daily toil and thought for thee ?
My labour for the bread that perishes ?
'Thou reapest but of temporal things from me,
I reap from thee soul-bread that nourishes—
An inner life of love, and trust, and truth,
Of best ambitions that the heart can know,
Giving the vigour and the strength of youth
To noble purposes grown halt and slow.

Thou knowest little, but thou teachest much,
Thou toilest not, but thou art clothed and fed,
Heaven's kingdom upon earth is made of such,
The Great Master lovingly hath said :
It must be so, for when I look on thee,
All that is worthy, noble, undefiled,
Revives again the deep desire to be
To the Great Father as to me my child.

Contentment.

On rugged rocks where one would think it plain,
Lichen or moss would try to cling in vain,—
Yet, in the fissures rootage had been found,
By sweet wild flowers, that perfumed all around ;
While near by, in a garden, kept with care,
Some costly blooms were not so strong and fair.

A workman rose from table humbly spread,
And thankful felt for daily work and bread ;
Home-proud and thrifty, for an hour or so
He, whistling, used the weed-destroying hoe ;
While at the Hall, with luxuries replete,
His lordship yawned, and grumbled at the heat.



" War."

A healthy, happy, merry kitchen maid
 Listened when guests the grand piano played ;
 Her greatest grief was, being a hireling,
 She was forbidden at her work to sing ;
 While in her boudoir, it was plain to see
 My lady suffered much from ennui.

A city shop girl, issuing from her cot,
 From window sill plucked sweet forget-me-not
 And mignonette, and pinned them on her dress,
 A living picture of glad cheerfulness ;
 And looked more charming, sweet, and debonair
 Than ball-room belles, with orchids in their hair.

4.—Poems on Times and Seasons.

Mr. Midgley is no national poet ; he does not seize on every passing pageant, from the birth of a royal heir to the birth of a Commonwealth, and turn it into a miniature epic. Rather does his sympathetic muse seek out some grimmer reality of suffering—a war or an earthquake ; or it chooses some festival of the common people and traces its satisfying, simple delights up to the Giver of all Good.

War.

War on war ! this earth seems fated,
 Life devoid of noble plan !
 Hearts and homes are desolated ;
 Man's worst enemy is man.
 Where the promise of His coming ? Things are as they
 always were ;
 Sin and sorrow, greed and hatred, reign triumphant
 everywhere !

Does the music reach the ringers
 Closed within the belfry walls ?
 Nay, it floats away and lingers
 O'er the valley where it falls.
 In the belfry, noise discordant, ropes and cranks and bells
 and wheels ;
 But afar, borne on the breezes, sweetest earthly music
 steals.

So it is, O man, my brother !
 We who would know all the plan
 Understand not one another,—
 In this turmoil never can.
 Time and place are not propitious ; we must move in
 higher spheres,
 Ere we catch the music's meaning in the grand march
 of the years.

War and the Children.

“ It is not the will of your Father, which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.”—*Matt. 18: 14.*

By single precept, prayer, and hymn,
 We teach them to believe on Him ;
 Then rend their homes with shot and shell,
 And make their land a flaming hell ;
 And heedless of their pleading eyes,
 Their terror, grief and dumb surprise,
 Doom thousands, through their future years,
 To vice, and want, and shame, and tears.

If such the struggle now for bread,
 If little ones must go unfed,
 Better a babe's euthanasy
 Than life matured for butchery ;
 And it might serve to let Him know
 They are not wanted here below ;
 For, since His time, the busy inn
 Affords not even stabling.

Oh ! hapless little ones, your cry
On the hot air goes wailing by ;
But we are eager news to hear,
And make no sign, and shed no tear.
" There is no God," the scoffers say,
" There is no over-ruling sway !"
But greed, not God, should bear the blame
Of war's unutterable shame.

For God could never thus ordain
For innocents such brutal pain ;
He does not will, but overrules
The wrath of men, the speech of fools.
Rather, proclaim by word and pen,
While such things are, men are not men ;
And reason and humanity
Have scarcely yet begun to be.

After the Russo-Japanese War, 1905.

And now the smoke has passed away,
And now the din has ceased,
And now the reckoning is to pay,
After the ghoulish feast,
And now the captives wend their way,
Some westward, and some east.

What has been proved, what has been won,
What has been gained or lost ?
Shake hands, brave foes, your work is done ;
Sit down and count the cost ;
The burning fever's course is run,
Now comes the ague's frost.

As proof of claim, what now avails
The valour of the braves ?
All old-time heroism fails,
Torpedoes rule the waves,
In coffin-ships, o'er bursting shells,
Crews sink in watery graves.

Found wanting is all fiendish force,
As test of wrong or right,
The heart grows sordid, hard and coarse
That homage pays to might;
And fools are they, or something worse,
Who can in war delight.

Is yon the dawning of the day
Above the Zuyder-Zee?
And will its light yet win its way
O'er every land and sea?
And peace hold triumvirate sway,
With love and liberty?

Russia, 1906.

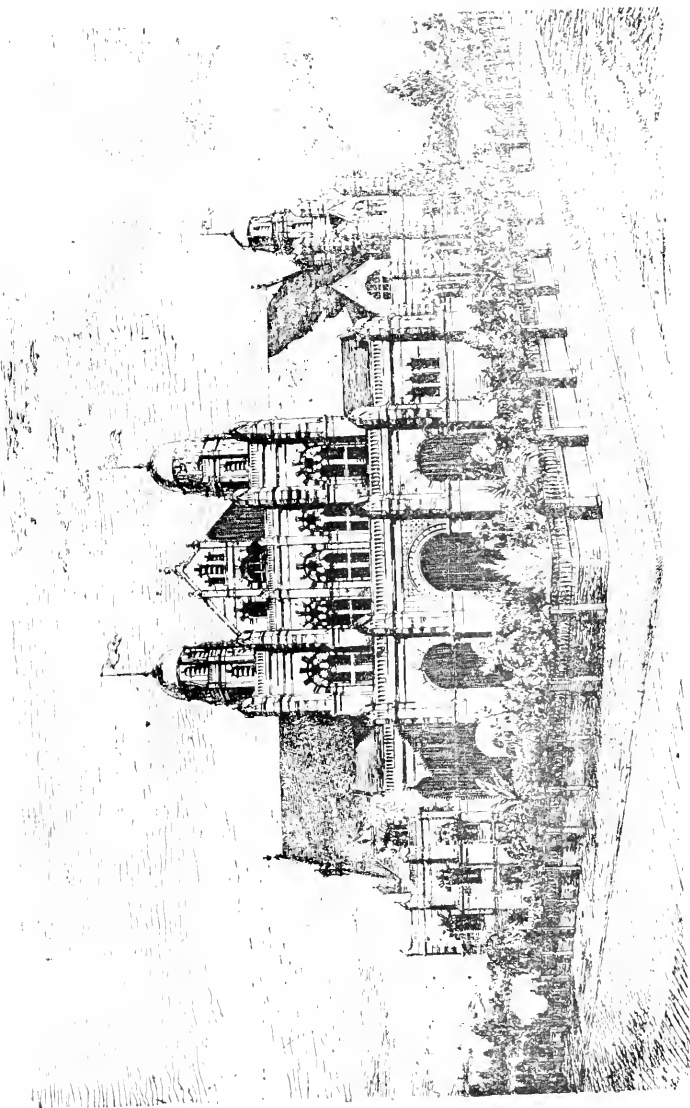
Ah me! what groans and tears,
What sanguinary fights,
What anguish through long years,
Men have to pay for rights!

What internecine strife,
Bloodshed, banishments long,
Contempt for death and life,
Contempt of right and wrong!

Still stands the warning word,
A thousand times made plain,
"Nations that love the sword,
Shall suffer lethal pain."

Oh, when will all men know,
In every clime and land,
Freedom can never grow,
'Neath despots' mailed hand?

Soon may a nation's will,
Assert a nobler choice
In clarion tones which thrill,
And exiled hosts rejoice.



Exhibition Hall.

San Francisco Earthquake, 1906

"I am a man, and all calamities that touch humanity come home to me,"—*Terence*.

We felt no tremor in this distant land,
No shock as if the world had weary grown
And soon would swerve and sway and quivering stand,
And then in fragments into space be thrown.

But when the news was flashed beneath the sea,
Our hearts grew faint with awe and grief and fear ;
Men asked in vain what can the meaning be
Of the dread portents of this fateful year ?

We cannot tell ; the best of men must bow ;
The wisest men are wiser in being still ;
And Faith and Hope speak tremulous and low,
In presence of such overwhelming ill.

But Love abides, and of the chastening rod
She makes a staff, and ventures forth again :
In things which hide the fatherhood of God,
She shows us still the brotherhood of men.

The National Show

We take from Thee, the Giver of all gifts,
The timely products that each season brings,
And love to Thee each thankful heart uplifts,
And in our souls makes melody and sings.

We bring to Thee thank-offering of our best,
Gathered from near and far, from land and sea,
And from our labours for awhile we rest,
To greet each other and to think of Thee.

To think of Thee, not now with awe and fear.
Like those who camp under the star-lit sky,
Or those who with a sense of danger near
Toil in the mines, where hidden treasures lie.

But as they think to whom spared life is sweet,
And sweet the light, and labour, rest and sleep,
Thy thought is ours, we think it right and meet—
Who sow in hope, with joy and praise should reap.

Make us a people whom prosperity
Does not debase by sensuous excess ;
Patient and brave when comes adversity,
When harvests fail and lean kine years distress.

The Exhibition.

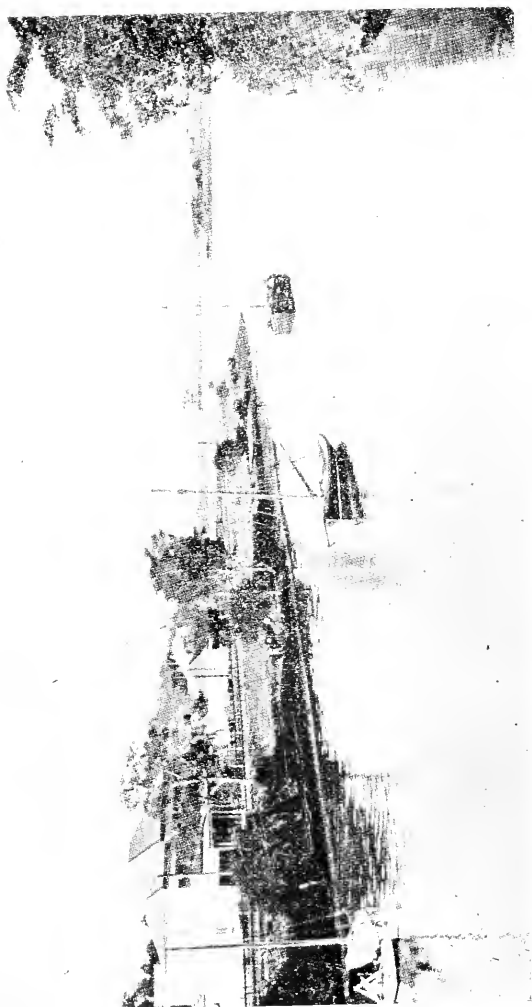
“ Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this ? ” — *Job* 12 : 9.

The spacious aisles with treasures filled
Bear witness of man's toil and care ;
But did not one more wisely skilled
To man assign his lesser share ?
Creation everywhere reveals
Design in its revolving wheels.

If in these works of human hands
Abundant wonderment is found,
The brain that plans and understands
In wonders does much more abound,
And past our searching out we find
The Maker of the human mind.

Lever, and spring, and rod, and wheel,
Designed by some external skill,
Devoid of power to think or feel,
Devoid of power of choice or will,
Bear witness, greater wisdom planned
The human mind, and eyes, and hand.

The cattle on a thousand hills,
The sheep upon a thousand plains,
The harvest that the storehouse fills,
The big, strong horses in the wains,—
Man has not made these, nor can he
Give his best works vitality.



" And Onward Rolls to Fertilise and Bless."

The secret and the gift of God
Is life, in all its endless forms ;
The flow'ret peeping from the sod,
The trees that brave the fiercest storms ;
Through each succeeding higher grade,
Man uses things he has not made.

And shall we proud and boastful be,
As if we had nothing received,
And hold these gifts from duty free,
And God in them be unperceived ?
Or see in them His generous hand,
In all the harvests of the land ?

A New Year's Wish.

As when a river, fed from snow-crowned hills,
In deepening bed and widening channel fills,
And yet so vast the constant inward flow,
Midway the river to a lake doth grow,
And wide outspread, far as the eye can see,
Mirrors the sky in deep tranquility.

So may the blessings coming from above,
And all the human tribute streams of love,
Serve other ends than mere utility,
And something better than a mill-stream be ;
Made potent, as the growing stream rolls by
Our lives to broaden, and to beautify.

And as the river-lake finds its egress,
And onward rolls to fertilise and bless,
So may our lives receive but not retain
Their pent up blessings from the lower plain ;
Each proving year by year, and more and more —
“ There is that scatters, yet augments its store.”

Easter.

"Come, see the place where the Lord lay."—*Matt.* 28 : 6.

He drained the cup of anguish to the last,
He could not leave the cross ; love held Him fast ;
But all is o'er of darkness and of pain,
The life laid down is taken up again.

Come, see the place this hallowed Easter morn,
Lift up your heads, ye weeping ones forlorn ;
No room for doubts, no need for sad laments,
Nothing remains but folded cerements.

Come, see the place, Salome, Magdalen,
John, Peter, James, and learn what it doth mean ;
His rising is the keystone of the arch,
The jubilate of redemption's march.

Come, see the place ; the morning light streams in ;
The sting is drawn of human guilt and sin ;
The fear of death—a life-long bondage strong—
Has changed its dirge for a deliverance song.

"Remember the Sabbath Day."

To those who know Thee, Lord, Thy will is best,
For each behest of Thine is good, and right,
And this day, made for man, divinely blest,
Brings welcome rest, and duties that delight.

We thank Thee, Lord, for rest for limb and brain,
And all of earthly good Thy day brings forth,
For quiet fellowship of homes again,
And kindred sympathies of priceless worth.

For thoughts of Thee that bring us trust and peace,
For songs of Zion, and comfort of Thy word,
And for the hope, when earthly Sabbaths cease,
An endless one awaits Thy servants, Lord.

Very Like Him.

There goes old Father Christmas, in a motor car, no less !
As near as is conventional, in light and cool undress ;
But when our dads were lads, Sam, some few score
years ago,
He travelled in a slow stage coach, wrapped up from top
to toe.

His hampers used to be replete with bottled drinks and
lemons,
Whose car seemed largely loaded now with grapes and
water-melons,
His trunks and boxes would not close, packed tight with
woollen stuffs,
And rugs and flannel underwear, and boas, and gloves,
and muffs.

In a motor car, indeed, for he has to go the pace,
And against want and sorrow run, for once, a winning
race,
With wearables, and eatables, and drinkables galore,
And Noah's arks, and dolls, and books, as in the days of
yore.

The same kind merry twinkle still sparkles in his eye ;
I thought I caught the flash of it, as he went whistling
by,
But just then Sam said dryly, "Your sight is failing fast !
That was not Father Christmas, but Brown that hurried
past."

And I, brought back from distant scenes, and days of
auld lang syne,
Explained myself, as best I could, to prosy friend of
mine ;—
"Was that Ben Brown, big-hearted Brown ? Well, he
must surely be
His modern representative, and local deputy !"

5.—Reflective Poems.

Here and in the following section Mr. Midgley is at his best. His subjective note is strong and true. There is a fine analysis of feeling ; a rare appreciation of the better things : and the poet brings to his song that exquisite tone which puts a charm on the commonplace. "Charity" contains five verses of very simple beauty. "Thoughts at the Graveside" might have been written by Young, or Montgomery, or Coleridge. "Goodly Fellowship" is a daring, but quite reverent, recital. "The Far Spent Day" breathes deep faith in its quiet lines--lines that have the ease of genuine art, and the simplicity of eternal truth. "Diversity of Operations," and "The Pruning of the Vine" have almost the personal note of autobiography. The two longer poems that close this section move like some winding willow-fringed river, with no babble of the brook or roar of the ocean in them, but noiseless and deep, reflecting the poet's thought even as the branches are mirrored in the placid surface.

I've Been Thinking.

"We spend our years as a tale that is told."—*Ps.* 90: 9.

I've been thinking, often thinking, of the years for ever
flowed ;

Of the scenes I've played a part in, the comrades I
have known ;

And I fancy I am nearing the final scene of all,

And soon the lights will be turned out, the curtain soon
will fall.

I've been thinking, sadly thinking, I might have played
my part

With touches true to nature and impromptu from the
heart,

Intrusted with portrayal of some traits of manly worth,
Evoking emulation, and provoking smiles and mirth.

I've been thinking, rightly thinking, 'tis useless to regret ;
And wiser, in the closing scenes, to aim at winning yet
The "Well done!" of the Author, and the plaudits of the
throng

By playing well my minor part, and snatches of sweet
song.

I've been thinking, gladly thinking, that this is after all
Only a brief rehearsing time, and when the final call
Shall come and end the story, it may have proved to
be

The very best of training for strolling players like me.

Charity.

“And now abideth Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three;
but the greatest of these is Charity.”—*I. Cor. 13. 13.*

She is the homeliest of the three,
Her tender eyes show signs of tears,
Her hands, inured to ministry,
Like Martha with her cares and fears.

Faith sings a more exultant song,
Hope has more radiant brow and eyes,
But Love with love is brave and strong—
With solace even in her sighs.

They are the handmaids, she the queen,
But, sister-like, and hand in hand,
Like equals they are sometimes seen,
As they go singing through the land.

They treasure up the gifts of God,
But she distributes of her store,
She moves in haunts by them untrod,
And cheers and succours evermore.

They fairest are of human birth,
But she is like her Lord divine,
And in her heart the best of earth,
And heaven's best meet and combine.

Day Unto Day.

Day unto day brings pressure of new need ;
The common round, or quest of greater good ;
Recurring hunger, and insistent greed
Deferring hopes of human brotherhood.

We sometimes fret and think there is excess
In our proportion of the common care ;
And in good truth our burdens would be less,
Did we not carry needless threefold share.

We bear them thrice—anticipating them ;
In morbid mem'ries after they have ceased ;
And, often, in participating them,
The present pressure proves to be the least.

Let us go forth from morning until night
With willing hands prepared to do our best ;
Nor quite forget, even in the noontide light
The night is coming, when we all shall rest.

Not quite forget ; for see, in busy streets
With slackened speed men hurry to and fro ;
The closing stream the funeral cortege meets ;
They, one by one, the way of all flesh go.

Diversity of Operations.

He used to ask that he might surely tell,
By some indubitable voice within,
That with his soul all was secure and well,
And feel forgiven his repented sin.

No answer came, such as he thought to hear,
Clear and distinct as a corporeal sense,
No declaration audible and clear,
No demonstrative inward evidence.

But his repentance was not short or vain,
In doing right he showed its needful fruits,
And unto him one thing at least was plain —
The will of God controlled all his pursuits.

But more he craved ; rapture, and ecstasy ;
Of which he had sometimes heard others speak ;
And thought some sore defect there needs must be,
His motives wrong, or else his faith too weak.

Rest came to him at last ; as guidance came ;
He read the precepts and the promises ;
No other record does he seek or claim.
Enough for duty and for peace are these.

Goodly Fellowship.

Was I lonely, while you left me to myself an hour or so,
And together in the evening to the house of God did go ?
Did the unwonted stillness of each room oppress my
heart,
When I heard you close the garden gate, and saw you all
depart ?

Well, yes, loved ones. At first I felt when you had gone
away,
That I would fain have gone with you, with you to
praise and pray,
As I watched you in the gloaming 'til you were out of
sight,
I longed, with ardent longing, to have gone with you to-
night.

Then seated by the doorway the church lights I could
see,
I heard you sing, and I joined in, and sang " Abide with
me."
And as the darkness deepened fast a blessed thing befel,
More mystical and beautiful than I have words to tell.

I was gazing at the crescent moon, and starry hosts on
high,
And all the things unseen seemed real and imminently
nigh,
And then it was, or seemed to be, soon after you were
gone,—
I had a visit from, and talked with, the disciple John.

And sweet was the communion which we together took,
He told me things the Master said, not written in the
Book,
While I indeed said little, being half afraid to speak,
Lest I the precious time should waste, or I the spell
should break.

But just before he rose to go, I ventured to inquire,—
“Beloved One! Of Jesus’ words you never seem to tire;
The precious sayings of the Lord, on which we love to
dwell,—
How came it that you heard the most, and have the most
to tell?”

And then I thought I saw him smile, in gentle, kindly
way,
And clear, and musical, and low, I heard, or felt him
say,—
In tones which seemed to blend somehow with service-
closing hymn,
“They hear the most, who love the most, and keep most
close to Him.”

Thoughts at the Graveside.

I too must yield—how soon, unknown—
Must yield this fleeting breath,
Give all life’s projects to the wind,
Leave all I claimed on earth behind,
When I am claimed by Death.

Palatial hall, or peasant's cot,
 May be in life my home,
 But to a narrow house of clay,
 I too ere long must move away,
 The tenant of a tomb.

And what is all our earthly hope,
 Adorn it as we will ?
 Let poets sing, and sages say,
 Adorn it with what charms we may,
 Hope is delusive still.

There is a hope of higher flight,
 That smiles, and soars, and sings,
 When other hopes have had their day,
 And perish in the grave's decay,
 With foiled and folded wings.

The Pruning of the Vine.

As yet no form or comeliness is seen ;
 'Tis bent and twisted, rough, and gnarled, and bare ;
 Whence can there come the leaves of burnished green,
 Tendrils, and bloom, and clustering bunches fair ?
 Who tells it when September days are here,
 How does it draw its juices from the earth,
 Until ere long the ripened grapes appear,
 Rich in refreshment and in latent mirth ?

Luxuriant growth of the last season's prime,
 The husbandman, I see, has cut away,
 Not wantonly, but thinking all the time
 Of better fruit, some brighter future day ;
 Like many lives that would have fruitless been,
 Had not the Pruner freely used the blade ;
 The noblest natures that the world has seen,
 Have often been through suffering perfect made.

Pain is not good, nor grief, nor want, nor loss,
We only mock men if we say they are ;
There is no joy enduring in a cross,
The good and joy are higher, nobler far ;
When patience, goodness, and compassion grow
In fruits abundant, 'neath the Pruner's hand,
The use of ills we then begin to know,
The Pruner's art we almost understand.

The Far Spent Day.

Come, fellow way-farer, and rest
Beneath this sheltering shade !
While sinks the sun towards the west,
And day begins to fade.

See in the past, now growing dim,
The way that we have trod,
And let us sing some dear old hymn
Of gratitude to God.

From Memory Land we journey on,
The Land of Hope to gain,
Thankful for what is past and gone,
Of pleasure and of pain.

Beyond those hills that lie before,
Beyond yon setting sun,
God has some better thing in store,
When pilgrimage is done.

One shadowed valley still remains,
Just at the journey's end,
One shallow stream, then sunlit plains,
And home, sweet home, my friend !

Sabbath Evening.

Hark ! o'er the verdant vale,
At peaceful close of day,
Now rings the church-going bell aloud,
Then gently dies away.
The mellowed cadence makes
Sweet music in the air,
Reminding men of better things,
And scenes more wondrous fair.

Up to the House of God,
Through pastures rich and green,
The eager young, the chastened old,
Wending their way are seen ;
Answering the welcome call,
They hitherward repair,
To raise the voice in grateful song,
And penitential prayer.

What is there on this earth,
What scene so near to heaven,
So full of peace, akin to joy,
As a calm Sabbath even ?
When nature seems to bask
Beneath God's cloudless smile,
And man seems to his Paradise
Restored a little while.

"Now We Know in Part."

My little maid, not four years old, will sometimes startle
me
With questions that are causing her profound perplexity ;
And I reply with answers which are but the truth in
part,
Adapting them, as best I can, to her young mind and
heart.

Already, on her flower-strewn path, some fleeting shadows
fall;
Pain, sorrow, tears, arrest her mirth; she wonders at
them all,
And asks me, why? and how? and where? when weary
of her play;
And oftentimes I hardly know what is the best to say.

It is not that my scores of years have nothing with them
brought
Of clearer insight, higher hopes, and more maturing
thought;
Though meagre is the total of my harvest here below
I know much more than I can tell, or little child can
know.

And I think that it is so, and will be so all our days—
In our searching to find out all God's mysterious ways;
For He cannot yet impart what we cannot comprehend,
The meaning of the journey, 'til we reach the journey's
end.

Have we not grown, and changed, and learnt, from child-
hood up to age?
Has not the book unfolded more with each succeeding
page?
We know enough for us to hope that we shall know
much more,
Enough to hope God has for us some better things in
store.

And as my little maid, tired out, sinks peacefully to rest,
Enfolded by protecting arms, pressed to a loving breast—
So may I rest in stronger arms, from fear of evil free,
Assured, like as I pity her, so does God pity me.



"The Team was Fresh and Eager."

The Journey of Life.

AN ALLEGORY.

In the crimson-tinted morning the journey was begun,
The team was fresh and eager, the coach was light and
new ;

All the land was roseate in the rising of the sun,
And fragrant were the flowers that by the wayside grew.
With bells a-ringing, bugles blowing, Innocence and
Trust

Hardly felt their collars as they rattled o'er the track,
While Wonder and Impatience in the traces spurned the
dust,

And young life laughed at everything, and everything
laughed back.

But long before the noontide, commenced the second
stage ;

Steeds were changed and scenes were changed with hardly
a regret,

For the road passed pleasant places from youth to
middle-age,

And on broad plains past pinches 'twas easy to forget.
Now Duty and Ambition pulled together with goodwill,
Together bearing bravely the burden of the day,
Reaching the grander prospects of each surmounted hill,
While Love and Emulation with light feet led the way.

And if sometimes they stumbled, 'twas not weariness but
haste

That caused a moment's break in the rhythm of the
road ;

When it was past meridian there was no time to waste,
The first faint-falling shadows would soon be dark and
broad :

And ever and anon, perchance, borne on the vibrant air,
Loud thunder in the distance fell on the listening ear,
And the big rain drops betokened that soon the landscape
fair

Would be o'ercast by clouds, which the storm was bring-
ing near.

So passed the changing day, and soon the eventide drew
nigh,
In silence and with shadows the gloaming fell apace,
And the cross of stars serenely its symbol raised on high,
Its light and meaning shining upon each upturned face ;
The converse grew subdued and low, but Patience and
Content,
With Faith and Hope as leaders, as under charm or
spell,
Trode safely in the darkness, as adown the hill they went,
Nor ever swerved or stumbled—they knew the road so
well.

Then came the bridgeless river, at the journey's utmost
bound.
Rolling between the lowland and the lofty further shore ;
The water in the sedges, with plaintive sobbing sound
Flowed deep and dark on either hand, and deep and
dark before,
Save where the rippling surface reflected gleams of light,
That fell upon the river from pearly gates afar,
Making a radiant pathway of tessellations bright,
To the eternal city where many mansions are.

Convalescent.

Thank you, dearest, now I'm ready
For the big veranda chair ;
Leaning on your arm to steady,
I can totter there, with care ;
Talk of angels ! Angels never
Could more good and gentle be—
Or more patient, than you ever
In dark days have been to me.

Comfortable ? Yes, delicious !
Head and heart, and limbs at rest,
Air, and earth, and sky propitious,
Every sense revived, refreshed ;

Breezes with their balm of healing—
Loving loved ones near at hand—
Oh! how glorious is the feeling,
Oh! how lovely all the land.

Hope revives and joy in living
After weariness and pain,
All the world seems bent on giving
Zest to dear old life again;
Ferguson was ploughing yonder,
Just before I took my bed;
After clouds, and rain, and thunder,
Tasselled corn waves overhead.

Now I cease my childish chatter:
Read to me a short, sweet psalm,
Anyone, it does not matter
So it be serene and calm;
Or a song that tells of gladness,
Pride abased, and trust renewed,
Leaving little room for sadness
When the chastening is reviewed.

6.—Poems of Democracy.

Through very many of Mr. Midgley's poems, in other sections than this, there can be felt the thrill of sympathy with all who struggle and suffer. He sees, as clearly as all must see who think at all, that earth is not yet heaven, that there are traces still of the ape and tiger in man, that there are many wrongs which could easily be put right if only "men to men would brothers be." But he does not propose any heroic transformation of society by a species of stage conjuring. He aims at reform through individual action—the individual leaven that is to purify and uplift the mass.

Charity one to another ; help to lame dogs getting over stiles ; thoughtfulness, and industry, and thrift, and a higher aim in life—these are some of the aids towards establishing the kingdom of heaven among men. A little that a righteous man hath (so runs the teaching of "Aim High") is better than the treasures of the wicked. Mr. Midgley does not deal with the changing machinery of the caucus or ballot box ; he believes that inward principles are more potent than outward restraints, and that a reign of love is better than a reign of law.

How Much Owest Thou ?

"Freely ye have received, freely give."—*Matt. 10 : 8.*

Your worldly-wise philosophy
Is wrong, if Christ be right ;
No cynic maxims justify
The arrogance of might.

The old wrongs to perpetuate
Is an ignoble task ;
Your doctrine bears no Christian date ;
Throw off your frowning mask !

Because you suffered want of old,
And had an uphill fight,
No reason is why you should hold
Your hand so close and tight.

If you by sordidness have gained,
Humanity has lost ;
Some tender heart may have been pained—
Some better purpose crossed.

Now that in comfort you can live,
No longer labour driven,
With a good heart, and good grace, give
As God to you has given.

What is Your Life?

"A living dog is better than a dead lion."—*Eccles.* 9: 4.

He idly boasts of an illustrious name,
Patrician birth and ancient family,
His social rank and old ancestral fame,
Whose own career has been, in guilt and shame,
A long descent from true nobility.
A lion prone, and powerless, and dead,—
What boots his mane, and once majestic head?

The foundling lad, whose dark sinister bar,
No deed of his serves to perpetuate,
To whom the struggle is severer far,
To make a name, that others did but mar,
And from his shield the bar obliterate,
Though treated as some meaner quadruped,
Is nobler than the noblest lion dead.

So is it also in more sacred things,
Men mourn the men they knew, the times they've seen,
And nothing good to them the present brings,
They spend their days in doleful murmurings,
And pine and whine for things that once have been;
Strange that such lions, once so freely fed,
Grow up so lean, they seem as good as dead.

Can he be said to live whose soul is dead,
Reduced to dross in furnace fires of lust,
Whose reverence for womanhood is fled,
Whose faith in God and man has perished,
Whose heart has starved on ashes and on dust?
Ah, no! though of some ducal house a scion,
His aptest likeness is a lifeless lion.

The Talents.

“Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner and another after that.”—*I. Cor. 7: 7.*

Few in number though they be,
Larger share I dare not ask;
Nor some grander, greater task
Think should be assigned to me;
Talents, buried in the dust,
Gifts in indolence that rust,
Only add unto the sum
Of the reckoning to come.

Discontented with my lot,
Shall I in resentment say—
“Let the Giver take away
Gifts so few they profit not?”
Why so meagre is my share
Of the treasures rich and fair?
Beauty, genius, wealth and skill,—
He, withholding, served me ill!

Born of envious discontent,
Sordid, selfish is the greed,
More than it can use or need—
Pining for, and petulant:
Blessings better far than wealth—
Sight and hearing, speech and health,
Strong of heart and sound in brain,
Who, so blest, should still complain?

Let us use the talents lent;
Service in the past so poor,
Should restrain from asking more;
Gracious was the whole intent.
He knows best what to withhold
Of His treasures manifold;
Mercy gave us all our store,
Mercy wisely gave no more.

"Harden Not Your Hearts."

We stand appalled at evils vast,
Plague, famine, pestilence and war ;
In dark days think our lot is cast,
And wonder why such scourges are ;
But so it was, and even so,
Men wondered centuries ago.

What if earth's ills grow more acute,
The tribes outgrown, the place too strait ?
Averted eyes and lips turned mute
The trouble will but aggravate ;
But for brave hearts and helping hands,
Darker would be the darkest lands.

The hard, defiant, angry mood
Becomes us not, and profits not ;
Resentments cherished, unsubdued,
And old-time feuds not yet forgot,
Can only serve to petrify
All tender, kindly sympathy.

And whoso looks with stony gaze,
When pity from his eyes should fall,—
And whoso in his prosperous days
Can spare no gleaning ears at all,
Shall, when at last the field he leaves,
Have poor and blighted harvest sheaves.

"Aim High."

"Aim high, but let integrity and uprightness always preserve thee."

So spoke a father to his son, as on his head he placed
A hand that ne'er, in fraud or fear, the record had disgraced
Of manliness and nobleness, with which the world he
faced.

It trembled now, but his clear eyes, and hair like spotless
fleece,
And placid brow and accents low, told of the perfect
peace
Of one who trod life's ways with God, contented with his
lease.

In years, but not in heart, grown old, no grudge the world
he owed ;
In strength and health, and inward wealth, he reaped as
he had sowed,
And more and more, the ample store, in blessings over-
flowed.

Aim high, and nothing deem too great or good to be at-
tained,
But yet refuse a means to use by which the soul is
stained,
For evil done, whate'er is won, is all too dearly gained.

Better than skill, and strength, and speed, is manly
chivalry ;
Better defeat, than with deceit win a false victory ;
Better than wealth, obtained by stealth, is honest
poverty.

The prizes now and yet to come are neither few nor
small,
And better far aim at a star, than have no aim at all,
And waste the years in doubts and fears that coward
hearts appal.

Choose thou, my lad, whate'er betide, the good, and
straight and right,
Nor e'en in thought let deed be wrought that will not
bear the light ;
The last bell rings, and parting brings—Good night, my
son, good night.

The Miser.

His worst mishap was the first pound he saved ;
It lit the fire that better things destroyed,
The lust of gain, that grew on what it craved
And filled his heart and all his powers employed.

The fell disease pervaded soul and brain ;
The noxious weed o'erran and killed the flowers ;
He gave no joy to others in their pain ;
His hoarded gold brought him no golden hours.

His downcast eyes were filled with furtive fear,
His anxious thoughts were filled with needless care;
Who asked his help were answered with a sneer,
Or angry snarl, that he had nought to spare.

His body starved on worse than beggar's fare,
His mind was dwarfed in less than brutish bounds,
His home was loveless and its walls were bare,
And strangely absent were all pleasant sounds.

His bank broke not, for its reserves were vast ;
Thieves did not steal ; he lightly slept, and armed ;
But he lost all when came a voice at last,
That called his soul, reluctant and alarmed.

The Conclusion.

“What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?—*Micah 6: 8.*”

The laws of God are holy, just, and good ;
Not harsh demands of an exacting will,
But loving precepts of God's fatherhood,
In mercy meant to save the soul from ill.

Not galling fetters, but an anchor chain,
To save from shipwreck on the hidden reef ;
Each link essential for the stress and strain,
Each made to save from suffering and grief.

And this the sum and substance of them all,
 Justice and mercy and the fear of God ;
 A yoke so easy should no shoulder gall,
 A road so plain should be alertly trod.

Be just and true, be merciful and kind,
 Let the Divine control the human will,
 Let failures lead to lowliness of mind,
 All thoughts controlled by love that works no ill.

All that is best in all the written word,
 All that is right for man to do and be,
 The wisest counsel ever taught, or heard,
 Have here their essence and their summary.

7.—Personal Poems.

These few poems are grouped in one section rather from the fact that they each have a personal theme than from any similarity of thought or of treatment. Both in "Barnardo" and "Beethoven" there is again shown the poet's gift of sympathy; the verses on W. H. Browne are in a strong democratic note; "A Living Witness" teaches tolerance, because "the wheat of most religions is the same—it is only the chaff which men fight about," and Christianity is something far better than a mere struggle among creeds. The other poems have subtle touches, evincing a character analysis that is far from superficial.

Barnardo.

"A tiny girl came to the superintendent on Monday with twopence in her hand, 'Please, that's to buy a wreath for Dr. Barnardo.' A young woman hurried in late, after working hours. 'Don't shut the Castle for a minute yet, sir. I want to run and buy some flowers for him.' Amid the banks of rich blossoms, and mingling with the scents of lily and rose, I saw on Sunday and Monday many a little offering of love."

Like One who wept when He the city saw,
 Nor wept alone, but lost ones sought to save,
 So did he from life's pleasant ways withdraw,
 And to his life work all he had he gave.

All the great powers of the mind that planned,
All the great pity of his loving heart,
The strength and guidance of a willing hand,
And world-wide help, won with persuasive art.

Children forsaken, homeless, fatherless,
He found and sheltered, clothed, and fed, and trained,
And thousands mourn in filial distress
The friend from whom their higher hopes they gained.

The children's cry was ever in his ears,
For them he lived, and toiled, and pleaded hard ;
Then, in the fulness of laborious years,—
He took his rest, and went to his reward.

Beethoven.

“Beethoven in his late years was deaf. No whisper of sound reached his consciousness.”

He whose delight was in harmonious sound,
Ended his years in solitude profound,
Nor heard again from throat or pipe or string
Sweet symphony or blended chorusing.

Who would expect the sunshine-loving lark
To soar and sing when all above was dark ?
Who would have thought the great musician's skill,
That lived on sound, would live when all was still ?

He might have said, “ My minstrel days are done,
My work is ended and my laurels won ;”
Or mourned, resenting such a loss should fall
On him whose hearing was his all in all.

But music in him triumphed o'er control,
He thought it, wrote it, felt it in his soul ;
A greater master of sweet harmonies,
Because his heart rehearsed his melodies.

The things for service most essential thought,
Are sometimes soon to desolation brought,
Health, home and love,— the man of these bereft
Is so bereaved that there seems nothing left.

For self indeed small may the remnant be,
But for the sorrowing, deeper sympathy,
More tenderness of touch to soothe and bless
Hearts that have not grown used to their distress.

In Memoriam, *Ed H. Browne.*

Died 12th April, 1904.

To a friend he acknowledged his mortal weakness. "It is hard," he said, "to have striven all one's life to reach ideals, and upon attaining the power to give them expression, to be called away."

The brave heart in the fragile form
Grew weary and was still ;
O'erburdened by the stress and storm
Of years of human ill.

Could but the feeble flesh have borne
Its share in life's great task,
Not yet awhile, oh ! friends forlorn,
Had been the need to ask—

Who is there left to take his place,
Courteous, but firm as he,
Blending in one the strength and grace
Of manly chivalry ?

His gentle eagerness to earn
The weary toiler's trust,
Shall still survive, nor now return
To darkness and to dust.

For as this rich autumnal rain,
Now falling, chill and cold,
Shall fertilise each parched plain
To growth a hundredfold,

So shall our sorrow fruitage bear;
In new and high resolve,
To take our part, and do our share,
Life's mysteries to solve.

We make his ideals, his bequest ;
The flag falls not with him ;
Nor seek we an ignoble rest,
Nor let the lights grow dim.

We only leave his body here ;
Nothing can bury thus
The soul, that yet for many a year
Shall tarry still with us,

To teach us how to bear and do,
In pain and loss and wrong,
And in a noble life work true,
"To suffer and be strong."

A Living Witness.

Passing through the squalid courts and by-ways of the town,
You may often see the Father, just as the sun goes down,
Returning from his visits to the suffering and the poor ;
As I have often seen him, for thirty years or more.

When he came to the parish he was ruddy, young and strong,
And light of foot when he began these streets to walk along ;
But now his locks are turning white, his footsteps slow and lame,
Yet those who know him best declare his heart is still the same.

But in the best of service the most willing servants know
The weariness and weakness that force them to go slow ;
We have our best of treasures in earthen vessels still,
And the weak flesh helps but feebly the spirit and the
will.

Father Curphy takes no part in the bitterness of strife,
He has seen so much to pity in his pilgrimage through
life
That his preaching and his teaching and daily life reveal
The spirit of the Master who went about to heal.

We are strangers to each other, but his gentle kindly
face,
And devotion to his life work, are as a means of grace,
Reminding of the Healer ; Father Curphy is to me
One of His living witnesses whene'er his face I see.

A Daughter of Dorcas.

Gone, so soon gone, thou good and gentle guest,
So well beloved by those who knew thee best ;
Serene and saintly in our midst of late,
As one who seemed expectantly to wait
A looked-for summons to awaiting rest.

Richly adorned with every gentle grace,
Beauty of soul made beautiful thy face ;
Thine were the charms of angel's gentleness.
Of helpful sympathy and tenderness,
Which beautified their fragile dwelling-place.

We find it hard to think of thee as dead,
That thy good spirit from our midst has fled ;
All, all too few on earth are such as thou,
And such our loss, so great our grief, that now
We scarce can bow submissively the head.

We think what looks of love from thy soft eyes,
What words of cheer, what smiles of sweet surprise,
Might have made glad for years some happy home,
Or won back those from narrow ways that roam,
Or soothed and hushed the hungry children's cries.

Ah! could we but a few brief moments be
Where we who weep thy radiant soul could see,
The tears would dry, the tremor leave the voice,
The will of God would be our utmost choice,
Could we but see how well it is with thee.

Jacob.

In every land, 'neath every star,
His modern imitators are,
Who nothing see in human need,
But opportunities for greed;
Repelling suppliants with a frown,
And striking when their man is down.

Distrust the man who deals in cant
And is at heart a sycophant!
Who thinks that wrongs can righted be
By gifts of scheming policy.
And speaks and acts as if he thought
Even God's favour can be bought.

Beware the man who lightly speaks
Of upright men! the man who seeks
With flippant tongue, but furtive eyes,
To disrate truth, or defend lies!
For as he speaks 'tis plain to see
So in his inmost heart is he.

The home life is a crucial test;
Who reverence most, will serve the best:
But when a father, old and worn,
Is treated falsely, or with scorn,
Then all concerned should learn in time,
Such sins are close akin to crime.

Better no altar, church, or creed,
 Than these, mixed up with fraud and greed ;
 Truth in a mansion, hut, or tent,
 Is more than rite or sacrament ;
 Living epistles do far more,
 Than pulpit sermons by the score.

Old Jacob suffered much, but chief
 Of ail was his domestic grief,
 His evil traits he lived to see
 Transferred to his own family,
 And felt the truth, which most distressed,
 He most had wronged those he loved best.

8 — Poems on Religion.

It is in this section Mr. Midgley utters his best notes. In almost every poem there is a realism of feeling, and a devoutness^s that could only come from one whose spiritual experiences have been varied, searching and intense. "Restoring the Soul" is doubtless a bit of autobiography, dressed in a choice parable. "The Compensation" includes a beautiful simile with a lesson well worthy of the mental picture. "God over All," and "Dedication" deserve to find their way into recognised collections of Christian hymns, while there are lines in "Holy Ground" that even Whittier might have written. The reverent spirit of "The Still Small Voice"—and in fact of all the poems in this section—is beyond any criticism. There is not a suggestion anywhere of cant, or of morbid egoism. Mr. Midgley's hymns neither fall into unnatural gloom, nor is their spirit one of cheap and unsustained happiness. There is rather the peace that flows as a river, the quiet steady faith that can see ultimate good beyond every present ill, and that can in life's extremity still triumph and say "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Perhaps the noblest lines in all this section of matured spiritual thought are those entitled "In the Quarry." Verses such as these are worth being written on warm human hearts as well as being printed in cold type—

"We see men in their triumph, and we join in the acclaim,
 When preacher, painter, poet, is enshrined in niche of fame ;
 But the noblest that was in them, was in the quarry drest,
 Where years of toil did something, and suffering did the rest."

Dawn's Message

"In the morning I will direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up."—*Ps.* 5 : 3.

Last night, as often in the nights before,
The day's review caused some disquietude;
I almost said, "Lord, I will strive no more;
I have failed so oft in each beatitude."

The prayer I breathed was mixed with sighs and tears,—
The old, old, story of illusive good,
So oft repeated in the bygone years,—
Would God still hear? I doubted if He would.

But morning came, with upward hopeful look,
I gazed abroad on hills, and skies, and seas,
And I from them the daring solace took,—
My wants and sins are small compared with these.

The vital air, the all-pervading light,
The depths unfathomed, and the heights untrod,
And all the marvels of the starlit night,
And all the greatest, grandest works of God

But show His plans and purposes in part,
But feebly serve for symbols and for signs;
They may wax old, and perish, and depart,
But not His mercy and its vast designs.

In the Quarry.

"And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone, made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house when it was in building"—*I. Kings* 6 : 7.

In the quarry in the hills, there was toil, and stress, and strain,
Sound of sledges on the wedges, of chisel, bar, and chain;
The shouts of gangers calling to the hosts of delving men,
And a sound of many voices, like Babel o'er again.

In the dust and heat and turmoil the rocks were rent
apart,
And artificers took them and wrought with curious
art—
With the hammer and the chisel, the measure and the
square,
They were fashioned for their places with lavish skill
and care.

The solitude was broken where Hiram's workmen
sang,
And swarthy teamster's whip and cry amongst the cedars
rang,
As the slow-paced teams of oxen and escorts guarding
them
Took the finished blocks of masonry to old Jerusalem.

And some for strength intended, and some for beauty
planned,
But all beneath the guidance of a master builder's hand,
And some for the foundations, and some for outward
grace,—
Each finished stone was fitted for, and fitted in, its place.

Oh, the delving and the hewing ; oh, the burdens and the
care ;
Oh, the purpose, and the patience, of the preparation
there ;
Oh, the cutting, and the shaping, in the quarry far
away—
Before the crowning glory of the dedication day.

* * *

We see men in their triumph, and we join in the ac-
claim—
When preacher, painter, poet, is enshrined in niche of
fame ;
But the noblest that was in them was in the quarry
drest,
Where years of toil did something, and suffering did the
rest.

Dear saint of God, with tranquil heart and calm uplifted
brow,
The hammer and the chisel's work will soon be ended
now,
And the iron in the soul shall no longer pierce and pain,
And the things that we thought lost shall be the temple's
lasting gain.

In the Vineyard.

"Go work in my vineyard!" 'tis the Maker's request,
No call is so urgent, 'tis the Viner's behest;
Though fallen they be, and prone, and down-trod,
The hearts of all men are the vineyards of God.

Work, each one as we can, and each one in his sphere,
Our day will soon vanish, and night will be here;
Where sorrow and sin are needing us so,
And calling so loud, let us cheerfully go!

Go, but in going, let thy motive be pure,
Let love be thy prompter, and be firm to endure;
Have faith in God, and His promises trust,
In lifting the tendrils that trail in the dust.

For pity divine, and compassionate care,
And meekness, gentleness, patience, and prayer
Are needful to raise the vineyard down-trod
And make it bear fruit to the glory of God.

"I Will Fear No Evil."

If at the last my beloved ones go with me
And in the shadows keep me company
Far as they may, nor e'er let go my hands
Till they are grasped by other greeting bands;
Though warm and free may flow my good-bye tears,
Love, trust, and hope, shall have no room for fears.

Why should I fear, who through life's pilgrimage,
Through youth, and manhood, and maturing age,
From God himself, and those He gave to me,
Have nought but good received continuously,
The love that failed not in the chequered past
Shall soothe, and cheer, and strengthen, to the last.

Restoring the Soul.

"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."—*Hebrews* 12: 11.

We thought the tree was dead, because each branch was
brown and bare,
Nor springtime bud, nor summer leaf, nor autumn fruits
were there;
Nor pleasant shade, nor song of birds, nor any sign to
show
That latent loveliness lived still in shrivelled root below.

"The sun has shone too brightly in cloudless skies o'er-
head,
The days have been too beautiful," we sorrowfully said;
"Month after month of light and warmth, no sombre days
of rain,
The tree is dead," we sadly said, "and cannot live again."

We thought his heart was dead and cold, for years he
gave no sign
That aught he cared for human ills, or for the will
Divine;
He lived for self, and freely fared, and did as pleased him
best—
His life a long continuance of an ignoble rest.

But Mercy then, in dark disguise, sent wind, and storm,
and rain,
The lightning flashed, the tempest blast swept fiercely
o'er the plain ;
The searching moisture found again the almost lifeless
rocks,
The branches were adorned once more with foliage and
fruits.

And so it was with him, my friend, when prema-
turely old,
And in life's ills he'd lived to prove the impotence of
gold ;
Where other ways of love had failed, beneath the
chastening rod,
His life in darker days bore fruits of love to man and
God.

“Rich in Mercy.—Ready to Forgive.”

Brief words, but all sufficient for those in search of rest,
For those whose hearts are contrite, whose souls are sore
distressed ;
Like sea-shells, in which sometimes, we think, distinct
and clear
The sound of ocean's waves far off falls on the listening
ear.

All other hopes, all other pleas, we give up in despair ;
Complacent eulogy of self, and all self-pitying prayer,
Knowing with whom we have to do dare we plead
innocence ?
Or strong constraining circumstance, or fatalist pretence ?

We have to do with self, with conscience that arraigns,
With memory which the records keeps of losses and of
gains ;
Self, all alone with thoughts and fears that darkest
shadows cast
On the future that shall follow an unforgiven past.

And more than self, or fellow-men, we have to do with
Him
Who counteth not as holy angelic seraphim,
But notices the tears that fall from downcast weeping
eyes,
And unto whom a broken heart is pleasing sacrifice.

Oh, sweet and grand the music that lingers in the shells !
Deep unto deep responding of boundless mercy tells !
And the music, and its meaning, are felt on every shore,
Where men who have found mercy, show mercy more
and more.

Righteousness, Peace, and Joy.

When sorrow sobs in every prayer,
And sighs in every song,
Beware my soul, take care my soul !
There must be something wrong.
Where righteousness and peace are found,
Joy will sometimes appear,
As hidden springs that overflow
In fountains bright and clear.

With secret sin and cherished doubt
Joy has no fellowship ;
With things of darkness joy can have
No glad companionship ;
It cannot breathe in tainted air,
It soars the while it sings,
With inspiration in its notes,
And healing in its wings.

The Celestial Zion.

“ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”—*Isaiah* 35 : 10.

The last, best hope of all the human race;
Creation's climax, God's chief dwelling place;
Life's most sublime and loftiest ideal,
That man can think, or God to man reveal.

Our faith depends not on a written creed,
It is the life breath of our deepest need;
Nor do our noblest aspirations grow
On things we think we understand and know.

Where is this heaven of the saints of God?
What eye hath seen, or who its streets hath trod?
Locate, define, describe, what mortal can
The Home of God, the highest hope of man?

Nor trouble we—except to find the way
That leads from hence into the perfect day,
The path in which the just serenely go,
Walking by faith, since He has willed it so.

For He who made those shining orbs of light,
Like scattered beads, that sparkle in the night,—
A score of which, from the profusion wild,
Would scarce suffice for necklace for a child,—

Could nothing lack, if such His sovereign will,
Of power, resource, and wondrous, boundless skill,
To make this Zion sinless, deathless, bright,
And thither bring those precious in His sight.

Oh ransomed hosts! yon city passing fair
Is no mere mirage on the desert air;
It is a City with foundations strong,
And all its gates are open all day long.

The Compensation.

"A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—*I. Cor.* 4: 17.
How glorious was the sunset, each burnished, rainbow
hue
Blending before the background of arch of ambient blue;
Earth's exhalations mingling with sunbeams from
above—
Symbol of saintly sorrows, transformed by heavenly
love.

If from a few spent sunbeams—thus I wonderingly
thought—
And a few fleecy cloudlets, such beauty can be
wrought,
What then shall be the splendours of that far-off Better
Land
Made by Him who, in its making, had all things at
command?

Nay, think it not so far away; for far as it may be,
'Tis near enough for earth to know angelic ministry;
And it may be they happiest are, on mercy missions
sent,
When they return, and tidings bear of loved ones that
repent

To those to whom life's morning was soon with clouds
o'ercast,
And life's meridian glories have vanished in the past—
May such sunsets be a token adorning all the West,
That life's last hours to them shall be the brightest and
the best.

The Emmaus Journey.

"But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel."—*Luke* 24: 21.

We please not God by being in aught untrue,
Weekly dissembling change of thought and view;
Here, or hereafter, they have nought to fear,
When search for truth is humble and sincere.

Interpretations that have served their day
For something better sometimes pass away ;
We thought we knew, but knowledge grew with
thought—

Something we lost, while something more we sought.

An Israel and Redemption there may be—
Greater and better than they once could see,
Whose eyes, bedimmed by ignorance and sin,
Distorted, let the heavenly vision in.

But come what may, and be it loss or gain,
All things are ours if He with us remain—
Himself revealing as the Light and Way,
And with His blessing closing every day.

The Still Small Voice.

“ Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto Him, Rabboni.”—*John* 20 : 16.

When last she saw His face 'twas marred with pain,
More marred than face of man had ever been.
Nails, spear, and thorns, with scars and crimson stain—
With breaking heart the Magdalen had seen ;
Perhaps, like balm, her tears fell as she bowed,
And helped to wrap Him in His linen shroud.

When last she heard His voice He cried, “ I thirst,”
Mocked and forsaken in His dire distress,
His mortal agony had reached its worst,
Forsaken, and in utter loneliness ;
And she who at His feet with joy had knelt,
Only the anguish of the helpless felt.

In life's great sorrows do we ever see
The radiant face of Him we love the best ?
Even the truth is wrapped in mystery,
And faith and hope are oft put to the test ;
What God could do, we sometimes think He should,
And, when He does not, doubt if he is good.

Oh ! let us cease to knock at closed doors,
Since mercy's door has been thrown open wide !
The soul that listens, watches, and adores
Shall find Him near this blessed Easter-tide ;
Who love Him much how much they cannot tell,
Shall hear His voice, the voice they know so well.

Where God Speaks.

" They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden
in the cool of the day."— *Gen. 3 : 8.*

They greatly err who suffer toil and care
To leave no time for solitude and prayer,
Nor thoughts of things eternal and unseen,
Or sorrow for the good that might have been.

Not in the haunts of hurrying human feet,
Where men in conflict or in commerce meet,
Are seen the footprints which His feet have trod,
Or heard the secret searching voice of God.

When daylight fades let earthly turmoil cease,
And let the heart be grateful and at peace ;
Some sad regrets commingling, it may be,
When the day's deeds in different light we see.

'Neath myriad tokens of His mighty power,
Each night brings with it its reflective hour ;
And though, sometimes, it brings reproof and fear,
The still, small voice falls on the listening ear.

Yesterday, To-day, and Forever.

" His name shall endure forever."— *Ps. 72 : 17.*

Not blazoned forth from minaret or dome,
Nor borne by some old city of the East,
Not merely chiselled on some ancient tomb,
Or the endorsement of a fast or feast.

City and shrine, and massive pyramid
By process slow are crumbling away,
And what hands built them, and the deeds they did,—
Who is there knows, or cares to know, to-day !

He needs them not ; for every wayside flower,
And child, and bird, and everything that is
Brings some reminder of Him every hour,
Unto His hosts of living witnesses

Who bear His name deep-graven on their hearts,
The synonym of all that is the best,
The burden of a song of many parts,
Whose sweet refrain is peace, goodwill, and rest.

“When Deep Sleep Falleth on Men.”

The window lights have gone out one by one,
And young and old are lulled by kindly sleep ;
And who from now until the rising sun
Remains in charge, and watch and ward doth keep ?

Even we, who chide our children for their fears,
Love not the darkness and its solitude ;
Life's mysteries deepen with maturing years,
And midnight hours augment their magnitude.

And we, perforce, must leave this hemisphere,
To find its way back to the morning light ;
We have no power the course to set, or steer
From midnight gloom to mid-day glory bright.

For we, the wisest, are but at the best
Like those who journey o'er the trackless deep,
And leave the deck, and soon turn in to rest,
And trust themselves to those who vigils keep.

“Holy Ground.”

“Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins.”—*Ps. 19: 13.*

O God, in all my thoughts of Thee,
And of Thy Fatherhood,
Familiar names and terms must be
With reverence understood ;
For other attributes belong
To Thee the Lord most high,
The Lord of Hosts, the great and strong,
Filling immensity.

Only so far to me revealed—
As finite sense can bear,
To me in darkness lies concealed—
More than is yet made clear ;
How should I know the infinite
Being, and might of Him—
Whose unapproachable dread light
Dazzles the seraphim ?

If in untempered, erring zeal,
As if I all things knew,
My words but wound when I would heal,
Distorting what is true.
Teach me that Thou dost not require
The untrained hand of youth,
Or falling of revengeful fire,
To save the cause of truth.

The things of life and death are Thine
Beyond my skill or care ;
The trustful, reverent heart be mine,
And humble praise and prayer ;
Heart, hand, and tongue, thought, word, and deed,
Guide in my offerings,
Lest I Thy mercy most should need
In my most holy things.

God Over All, Blessed for Evermore.

God over all, blessed for evermore,
With awe profound I reverently adore,
Well-nigh o'erwhelmed is each poor finite sense—
With thoughts of Thee, and Thine omnipotence.

God over all the awful silences,
God over all the appalling distances
Of time and space; pervading yet apart;
Where all things are, and nothing is, Thou art.

God over all; the angel hosts on high—
Dwelling in light that dazzles seraph's eye—
The highest creatures understand not God,
Thy holiest place no creature's foot hath trod.

God over all, eternal and supreme,
Man's highest thought, his reason's grandest theme,
And yet how dimly known, at best. Thou art,
When reason only rules the mind and heart.

God over all, I ask that I may be
True unto that which is the truth to me;
I know enough to trust Thee, and adore,
God over all, blessed for evermore!

From Carmel to the Cave.

I. Kings: 18-19.

What doest thou here, repining at thy lot?
All trust in right in thoughts of wrong forgot;
In gloomy cavern, a morose recluse,
Pleading for thy retreat some poor excuse.

Forgetting all that God for thee hath wrought,
Does all the past now count with thee as nought?
What is the meaning of the plaintive moan—
“Lord in Thy service I stand all alone!”

The world is not abandoned to the bad,
There are brave hosts in God's whole armour clad ;
And thou art here, instead of in the field
Helping to force the wavering foe to yield.

Gird up thy loins, go back to thy Jezreel !
No fear of man the man of God should feel ;
Go, ere too late lamenting thy disgrace,
God sends some young Elisha in thy place.

Dedication.

For praise, for fellowship, and prayer,
And preaching of Thy word,
This hallowed house, with pious care,
We offer Thee, good Lord ;
It is not equal to our thought,
Not worthy of Thy feet,
Vain is the work our hands have wrought,
'Til Thou establish it.

Oh, come Thyself and beautify
Thy house, Thou Fairest One !
Nothing these courts can sanctify
If Thou from them art gone.
Organ, and arch, and floral wreaths,
And beauties manifold,
Without Thee are but vanities,
Ichabod writ in gold.

But Bethel, Beulah shall it be,
If here to us are given
Communings of our souls with Thee,
And glimpses into heaven.
Be pleased, in mercy, Lord to give
Heart tokens even now ;
Our offerings Thou wilt receive,
And our requests allow.

And more we need and ask for yet ;
May this an Elim prove,
Where faces towards Zion set,
Shall glow with hope and love !
A place where weary ones shall rest,
Where thirsty ones shall drink,
And souls within Thy temple blest,
Shall of Thy kindness think.

“The Master is Come and Calleth for Thee.”

When all is said some mystery must remain,
O’ershadowing all earth’s misery and pain ;
God has not made us that He can impart
His every thought to every human heart ;
Prayer has its limits, wide though they may be,
Reason, o’ertaxed, leads to despondency ;
The risen dead could not the veil withdraw,
Nor leave on record what he heard and saw.

This we may know, in things not yet made clear,
The Master’s voice is calling everywhere,
Where’er we move, in each succeeding stage,
In youth, in manhood, and maturing age ;
But in distress we are more quick to hear
His voice and footstep as He draweth near ;
When sinks the sun the shadows needs must fall,
But in the shadows clearer comes the call.

’Tis well with them, who, whatsoe’er their lot,
In Nazareth workshop, or its lowly cot,
In Cana joys, and glad festivities,
In Bethany’s friendly hospitalities ;
And in the darker, sterner scenes to come,
In griefs supreme, in desolated home,
In life, and death, can feel and understand
Enough to know the Master is at hand.

Just Speak a Word for Me.

Old friends on earth, whom seldom now
It is my joy to see,
When at the mercy-seat ye bow,
Just speak a word for me !
And pray that one who sorely failed
To serve God when he might,
May find that suffering has availed
To lead him to the light.

Friends who have joined the ransomed throng,
If such a thing may be,
When pausing in your glory song
Just speak a word for me !
If with the angels ye may share,
In visits from above,
Commend me to the Father's care ;
Bring tokens of His love !

But best of friends, the sinner's Friend,
I put my trust in Thee,
Whose intercessions know no end ;
Oh, speak a word for me !
Pray that the Comforter Divine
May bring Thy words to mind,
And in each promise, Lord, of Thine,
May I some solace find.

Our Father.

In mere submission to Thy sovereign will
I cannot rest ;
I want to feel, in all of good or ill,
Thy will is best ;
And, though Thou slay me, to be conscious still—
Trust bears the test.

This sad solicitude for loved ones dear
 Oppresses me ;
 I see each promise through a blurring tear ;
 I long to be
 Able to leave them, without doubt or fear,
 Father, to Thee.

Thrice blessed thought ; this yearning love of mine,
 I think I see,
 Is but, at best, a feeble type of Thine
 To them and me ;
 Lulled like a child, I find, in love divine,
 Tranquillity.

9.—Poems for Recitation.

Some of these have already been recited—and encored—on the public platform. “An Army Strategist” and “Mr. Michael Maloney” win applause, not only for the incidents themselves, but also for the absolute good humour that pervades them. Mr. Midgley’s fun is never ill-natured ; it may not be boisterous, but it pleases all the same, and the lines will bear reading more than once. “Felix” and “Too Good” have no special pretensions, but in each there is the quiet touch and the homely environment that is not unattractive. “Hanging Judges” is an experiment, far below the work of Hood or Ingoldsby, but it is a happy trifle worth preserving. In “The Churl” a tragic note is struck, and one could wish for a better ending ; but there the story is, as repulsive as it is doubtless quite true. Some of the poems in other sections have been recited with success, notably “In the Quarry” (p. 83), “The Wattles are in Bloom Again” (p. 19), “Coo-ee” (p. 20), “The Miserable Crow” (p. 30), “The Hustling Westerlies” (p. 32), “A Bit of Maize” (p. 38), “A Bush Idyl” (p. 39), “Very Like Him” (p. 57), “Goodly Fellowship” (p. 61) ; and there are many others which a well-trained voice and a discerning mind would make most acceptable items at a church festival or public competition.

An Army Strategist.

Lot Grasper lived retired on his rents and paying shares,
 But he was always growling about taxes, rates, and fares ;
 Grasper had the reputation of being comfortably off,
 And was the sort of customer men like to label “tough.”

His home was in a suburb, two or three miles from town,
And one day he got in the train and banged the windows
down ;

"It is a burning shame," he said, "it's cruel, hard, and
wrong,

To charge so much for tickets to the city from Solong."

And as he fumed and fretted, a Salvation lassie, trim,
When he sat down beside her, seemed to sympathise
with him ;

And something she gently whispered in Grasper's ear
attent ;

And he, all eager, looked at her, and asked her what she
meant.

Then said the artful strategist, in guarded tones and low,
"I often travel ticketless, and if you'd like to know
How I manage to go in and out, and never pay a cent,
And how you, too, may safely do this beastly Govern-
ment :

"If you'll give me for the secret, for our rescue work in
town,

A cash-down contribution of at least a half-a-crown,
I'll tell you how I do it ; it's so simple, so secure ;

Is it a bargain ? Glory ! Thank you very much, I'm
sure !"

For Grasper by the wily one was clean thrown off his
guard,

And parted with the precious coin although he felt it
hard ;

And to himself he said, said he, with a sardonic grin,—

"To do as does an Army lass can surely be no sin."

And then she said demurely, "It's such a simple way
In which I travel to and fro, when not a cent I pay,
Sometimes, when funds are getting low—don't let them
hear us talking—

I go round by the river road, and find it pleasant
walking."

The train drew up, and she got out, retreating but
exultant,
She said, "Good day," and marched away, with victor's
spoils triumphant;
And as for Grasper, he confessed she had manœuvred
neatly,
"The blessed Amazon," he growled, "out-generalled
me completely."

A Song of Threepence.

Little Patrick Jason was hurrying through the street,
With no hat on his head, and no shoes upon his feet,
The day was cold and dismal, and as he onward sped
His hand was tightly holding a threepenny bit, for bread.

A pageant or procession came with quick march along,
With flags and bands of music, and somehow in the
throng
Patrick got bewildered; as o'er the street he crossed,
He was jostled, and, alas, the lad the precious three-
pence lost.

He searched for it in vain when the crowd had hurried by,
Then woman-like, as men would say, he had a "real
good cry,"
For threepences were precious, and mother was severe—
No supper and a hiding were what he had to fear.

A lady passing noticed him and came to his relief;
She handed Paddy threepence, and banished all his grief,
And a sudden revelation illumined all her mind
Of the folly of her hoardings, which she must leave
behind.

"Rich, widowed, childless," thus she mused, "why
should I defer
Duties that belong to me to some executor?
If giving only threepence could give such joy to me.
My own hands of my ample wealth shall my almoners be."

Dickey and I.

He only weighs an ounce or two, but sometimes he and I
Together from our narrow bounds in fancy free we fly;
Revisiting the scenes we knew when both of us were free,
And we are not near so lonely as we may seem to be.

For Dick in his small cage, and I wheeled out on pil-
lowed chair,
Are objects still of someone's daily loving thought and
care;
We cannot toil or spin now, but we need not fearful fret
Lest they who placed us where we are their captives
should forget.

I note, and noting something learn, when parrots home-
ward fly—
Or when magpies or when sparrows in noisy mirth
sweep by—
A transient look of envy, a brief pause in the song,
A fluttering at the iron bars, a sense of something wrong.

But the fretting is soon over, and he gives himself a
shake,
And he seems to try his hardest joy's topmost note to take;
He does not nurse his grief, and pine, but sings, or eats,
or drinks,
And maybe, in his little way, "things might be worse,"
he thinks.

No creature of environment or circumstance is he,
His little life is one sweet song of gushing melody;
With all God's works that praise Him, he takes a cheer-
ful part,
For the cage is full of sunshine, and gladness fills his
heart.

Felix.

Wee Felix was not welcome: there were five before he came
To share the scanty victuals and the squalid shelter claim
Of overcrowded dwelling, in courtyard by the quay,
And the Christian name they gave him seemed a sort of irony.

But little baby Felix did not seem to mind a bit;
Or, if he noticed it at all, he never mentioned it,
For he had made himself at home, and, "he's come to stay," they said,
And no one missed the baby's share of thinly-treacled bread.

So laughing, little Felix grew up worthy of his name,
For rain, or shine, or smile, or frown, to him were much the same;
He wakened with the dawning, with a croon of deep delight,
And through his hours of sunshine made hay with all his might.

Bright, fair-haired, fragile Felix, his sunshine soon was past;
His big and beautiful blue eyes grew dim and overcast;
In childhood's early morning, when the world is at its best,
He was stricken down with fever,—and need I tell the rest?

How he rallied and recovered, but has never seen the light
Since then, and thirty years have been one long, unending night,
A night of deepest darkness; but you could hardly tell,
For Felix with a big brave heart bears his great loss so well.

Brave, gentle, manly Felix never murmurs or complains ;
With skilful hands at wicker work, his livelihood he gains ;
He loves to read, by tender touch ; or else, the while he
sings,
His hands glide o'er the organ keys, or tuneful fiddle
strings.

Ah ! Felix, happy Felix, he has often put to shame
His friends whose light afflictions seem hardly worth the
name ;
He lives to some good purpose, who lives to bless and
cheer,
And bears his cross so nobly ; ours seems less hard to
bear.

Through thirty years no vision of earth, or sea, or sky,
Yet Felix has been happier, perhaps, than you or I ;
'Tis beautiful, and wonderful, and if you ask the cause—
He smiles, and says, " God's grace at work in compen-
sating laws."

The Pilgrim and the Shrine.

After long years she crossed the deep once more,
And, as the mists of morning cleared away,
Saw o'er the waves the well-remembered shore,
Bathed in the glory of the dawning day.

She tarried not in busy London town ;
Its wondrous sights could not a day detain ;
They well could wait, but ere the sun went down
She fain must see her mother's grave again.

The graves had grown in number, but she found
The one she looked for, and with reverence knelt ;
And warm tears fell upon the holy ground,
And new grief, mingled with the old, she felt.

For frost, and heat, and moisture day by day,
Like ghostly Goths, the tombstone had defaced ;
By process slow of crumbling decay,
Her mother's name had well-nigh been erased.

And as she knelt, she kissed the fading name,
Reluctant from the graveside to depart ;
Then from her lips the grateful utterance came,
" The best of records is a loving heart.

" The sculptured stone may slowly turn to dust,
Or fall unheeded on the yielding clay ;
But from my heart the memory of the just,
Cherished and blest, shall never fade away.

" As it has been, so shall it be to me,
An inspiration, long as life shall last,
That I, like her, by those I love may be
To memory dear, when I from them have passed."

A throstle warbled in the leafy trees,
The air was laden with the breath of flowers ;
And often in her Southern home she sees
The shrine where she spent sweetly solemn hours.

Good Night and Good Morning.

All ready for the ocean wide,
From ropes and chains delivered,
The ship rode on the midnight tide,
Where wharf and ship lights quivered.

And two I saw who, I could tell,
With grief were nigh heart-broken ;
A mother's and a son's farewell
With faltering lips were spoken.

The gangways up, the hatches down,
The ship for sea was ready,
And whistling left the slumbering town,
And bore away her Teddy.

“ Good night my son, farewell, be good ;
Write soon, and long, and often ; ”
And, from the deck, he cried he would,
And tried her grief to soften.

She turned to me and gently said,
As if her tears explaining—
“ A long sea voyage ! For my Ted
Was all the hope remaining.”

He came not back ; she went to him,
And found her place made ready ;
And smiling, as her eyes grew dim,
She said, “ Good morning, Teddy ! ”

Unequally Yoked

“ Is there anything new in the paper, Jack ? ” Janet will
sometimes say
To her goodman, as he sits and reads, in a taciturn sort
of a way ;
And laconical Jack, in morbid mood, the normal mood of
his life—
In this style often answers his optimistical Janet, his
wife :—

“ Is there anything new ? Well, yes and no ; for the
latest news seems stale,
Only that things are growing worse ; it’s the same old
horrible tale,
For the world is full, and the paper is full, of things that
shock and scare ;
Enough to make the bravest man go and suicide in
despair.”

Janet says, "Do you think, Jack, that things are worse
than they were long ago?
Or is it the fuller record given that makes them appear
to be so?
When comparing the past with the present times we
need to understand
That the news of the world is wired each day from every
distant land.

"And I noticed just now Jack, as you read, to yourself
you sighing said,
In an undertone, 'Dear me, I see poor old Tom Nobble
is dead;'
But you don't read out the weddings, and births, the
jokes and bits of fun,
And the hopeful fight for right going on, and the vic-
tories nobly won."

Then Jack looks over his glasses and says, "My girl, I
think you are right;
I look too much on the shady side, but you always look
on the bright;
We two are like Ned and Nancy, when they come to the
foot of a hill,
Ned seems to wonder why hills were made, Nancy goes
up with a will."

Hanging Judges.

Not that they ever hanged themselves,
Remorseful, in a tether,—
Save that in cases of appeal
They mostly hung together.

Their milder or severer moods
Left little room to choose
'Twixt penal servitude for life
Or else the running noose.

The line of argument they took
Was that of least resistance ;
"To law and order, a rope end,"
They said, "lent great assistance.

When some poor wight, by hunger driven,
Robbed cover, field, or barn,
Extenuating circumstance
They treated as a yarn.

And struggling ones to whom, submerged,
No lifeline e'er was handed,
Seizing some flotsam in despair,
Were hauled up high, and stranded.

And ribald court crowds oft recoiled,
When, in their gruesome wit,
They spoke of "lines of long descent,"
Or "hoped the cap would fit."

To victims whose environment
To crime predestinated,
To raise them law and judges said—
"Let them be elevated."

It mattered not, or young or old,
However tried and tempted,
The law was law, and from its maw
They must not be ex hemp-ted.

Ah, good old days, a long so-long !
My play on words is ended ;
The hanging judges and the laws
Are nearly all suspended.

And both, thank God and God's good men,
Have sympathies far wider,
Man's justice now is more divine,
Since mercy adds a rider.

Mr. Michael Maloney.

A SKETCH.

Mr. Michael Maloney was fond of a drop,
But he knew when to stop.
He was brimful of fun ; whenever he spoke
You expected a joke.

His favourite drink was a drop of good gin
With some sugar mixed in ;
A little hot water the last thing at night,
Michael said, was "all roight."

But work had been scarce and the times had been bad,
(" They had, so bedad ! ")
And, to say nothing of drink, for something to eat
He was almost dead beat.

And just at worst of his very worst days,
(As just happens in plays)
Two rather strange things to Maloney befel,
Which I hasten to tell.

The weather was wet and bitterly cold,
And poor Michael had sold
Or pawned at the corner what could be ill spared
And from this they had fared.

For Michael was married, and Nora to him,
And his little boy Tim,
Were the mainspring of toil, the sunshine of life—
Michael's son and his wife.

" There is work waiting for ye," said Nora, " my lad,"
When her Michael, ill-clad
And hungry and cold, had returned home one day
Without work, without pay.

"Mrs. Marmaduke Little has sent down to say
As their well's given way,
She wants ye to-morrow to bail out the mud
And to make the leak good."

Mike grafted all day, and he did his work well,
It is needless to tell.
And the great Mrs. Little doled out a small sum
And a drop of cold rum.

For Mike, you may judge, was in terrible plight,
As indeed he well might.
He sneezed and he coughed and he shivered galore,
And I've heard that he swore.

She measured it out, did the lady herself,
As she doled out the pelf;
About half an inch, and to Michael did pass
This mere drop in the glass.

And then as she put the decanter away
This great lady did say :
"This rum is the best and will keep out the cold,
It is fifteen years old,"

Mike, all of a shiver, eyed the glass for awhile,
Then he said with a smile :
"Well, madam, you're speaking the truth, I'll engage,
But it is small for it's age!"

* * * * *

Mike's slumbers that night were sound and serene,
And he dreamt that the Queen
Had invited him up to her palace to view
All her works of vertu.

He came down to breakfast with look rather sad,
For he felt rather bad.
And Nora inquired, "Is there anything wrong
That your face is so long."

Mike told her, his darling, his wonderful dream ;
How the ladylike Queen
Had shown him her gardens, her works of virtu,
And her wine cellars, too.

How they came to a cask, and the Queen said to him :
“ This is ten years’ old gin,”
“ Will you take a drop, Michael,” her Majesty said,
“ Or some whisky instead.

“ She asked me so kindly I could not say no ;
Then, turning to go,
She asked me, would I have my gin hot or cold ?
And myself made so bold

“ To answer the Queen in my ignorant way,
“ ‘ Well, ma’am, if I may
Make so free as to choose, if it matters not,
Well, I like it best hot.’

“ And hot it shall be,” she answered and laughed ;
Then she drew a good draught,
And ordered a servant with sugar and spice—
“ Go and make it real nice.”

Ah, Nora, dear, I made a mighty mistake,
For just then I did wake,
And I wished when too late I had not been so bold,
But had taken it cold.

The Churl.

“ There’s Dingo Downs head station,” as we rode on
together,
Said my comrade, as he pointed to some buildings just
in sight ;
And as we’ve come so far in this bleak west-windy
weather,
In this bit of sheltering scrub I propose we camp to-
night.”

He'd travelled on that road at least a hundred times
before,
With mail coaches, or bullock teams, or cattle in his
charge;
So I found him well acquainted with all the wayside
lore,
On convicts, blacks, and bushrangers, he could for hours
enlarge.

And that was how it happened, having hobbled up each
steed,
And made up a good fire—for the night was piercing
cold—
O'er a billy of hot tea, and the fumes of fragrant weed,
With many a running comment my mate this story told.

"It's twelve years since last December, or thirteen—let
me see—
'Twas in my first year's contract for the carriage of the
mails,
That was eighteen eighty five, so that thirteen it must be
Since Sandy Saunders closed the road, and fastened down
the rails.

"He'd only just found out, he said, there was no right of
way
Through that portion of his run, to the nearest country
town;
And he nailed up a notice to that effect that day;
And the sliprails, as I've said, he securely fastened down.

It was a road not often used, and harm was never done
To Sandy's standing timber, to his cattle, or his grass,
By settler's axe or dog, or traveller's match or gun;
But Sandy, all the same, begrudged to see a swagman
pass.

The settlers' homes were lonely, being few and far
apart,
Hemmed in by wire fences, by gully and ravine,
And when Tyler saw the notice it gave him quite a start,
No previous intimation had been either heard or seen.

His wife and he were driving, very slowly, in a dray
To Littlethorpe ; and Tyler was anxious, for her sake,
They should reach the distant township before the close
of day,—
Expecting, just as usual, the shortest road to take.

He read the penal notice ; then he walked up to the
house ;
And asked Sandy, as a favour, the use of the short road ;
But old Sandy in a passion began to curse and rouse,
And used very sultry language, in vivid Scotch and
broad.

Tyler tried to reason with him, remonstrate and explain
In delicate allusions to his wife's feeble state,—
How it might be harmful to her, if caught in teeming
rain—
And a storm seemed to be coming, and it was getting
late.

He might as well have reasoned with the posts of iron-
bark,
Or pleaded for compassion with each intercepting rail ;
So at last he turned away ; but his brow was stern and
dark,
His lips compressed, his eyes aflame, trembling, and
ghastly pale.

He spoke soothingly to Sarah, his fragile, frightened
wife ;
But he swore a solemn oath, in the great Almighty's
name,
That if anything went wrong with the idol of his life
Or with the little one unborn, Saunders must bear the
blame.

And everything went wrong, for soon the storm came on
apace,—
A tornado of fierce thunder, of lightning and of rain ;
And in the vivid flashes he saw her pallid face,
As she told him of her anguish and the premature dread
pain.

A twenty-mile bush journey, made careful, and slow, and sure,
Beneath the shade of sheltering trees, the girl wife might have borne,
But twice that, and the fearful storm, was too much to endure ;
Her babe was born that night, but both were cold in death next morn.

A week afterwards, and Tyler, with heart as cold as stone,
Drove up to the closed sliprails, and walked up to Saunder's door.
He was returning homewards, wifeless, childless, and alone ;
And in the interval had aged a dozen years or more.

He had hardly tasted food, nor ever soundly slept,
Since he had closed her eyes, and pressed a last kiss on her brow ;
He had hardly said a word, nor had ever sighed or wept.
With eyes distraught and glaring, he spoke to Saunder's now :—

“ My wife is dead ! ” said Tyler. Saunders answered,
“ So I hear ! ”
“ You killed her ! ” Tyler said again. Saunders thundered
“ You're a liar ! ”
“ I say you did ! ” said Tyler, “ and now, by God I swear,
Ten seconds' grace is all I'll give ; then, on my oath, I'll fire ! ”

“ Run, like a cur, run anywhere, while I am counting ten ! ”
And he clenched a new revolver, and spat on him, and hissed.
And seeing Tyler meant it, Saunders ran towards his men,
And Tyler finished counting ; then wildly fired—and missed !

It wouldn't make a novel, mate, this truthful yarn of mine,
For the cross-grained churl lived on, and prospered year by year;
And deranged, heart-broken Tyler, while doing penal time,
Died in jail, for slightly singeing that Sandy Saunder's ear.

Too Good.

A fine girl! I should say so, and as good as ever lived!
I say it, and I know it, and I may be believed;
She is very near perfection; I hope I'm understood
When I say she always has been, if anything, too good!

She will be eighteen next birthday,—come pass your empty plate,—
I'm telling Dawson, Martha, about our daughter Kate;
That we think she is the fairest that human eyes have seen,
And saying that, if anything, too good she's always been.

You are a judge of beauty, so, old friend, we'll let that pass.
Come now, it is our wedding day, fill up that empty glass!
But when I say our daughter ranks with the first and best
I mean not only for her looks but any other test.

We only have this one child, and could she have been spoiled
The purpose of the Giver we might easily have foiled;
But in her little head she holds good store of common sense,
Leaving small room, if any, for conceit and vain pretence.

But we nearly lost her, Dawson, when she was eight months old,
Not with mumps or scarletina, not with fever or with cold;
In fact, we did lose her awhile, which bears out what I say,
She was too good at that time, and used to sleep all day.

But she's bringing in the pudding, and it is just as well
That I've finished the short preface now to what I have to tell,
For while no thought of evil ever yet has flushed her cheeks,
She blushes when her doting dad her well-earned praises speaks.

Well, my wife's only sister, Jane, had fixed her wedding day,
And we three were invited; 'twas on the twelfth of May;
I did not own this store, then, but travelled with a van,
And was looked on by my friends as a pushing rising man.

So I got the van new covered, the harness clean and bright,
And we started on the eleventh, and stopped there overnight;
But the ceremonies over, I drove round to Tate and Tate,
And hurriedly laid in new stock, and bought a cot for Kate.

The bride and bridegroom, guests and maids all said
"She is too good!"
She wakened up a bit and crooned as if she understood;
We put her in her little cot, then placed her safe inside,
And wife and I got up in front and homeward we did ride.

We had thirty miles to travel, and with his heavy load
We let Horatius take his time, the first half of the road,—
I called my horse Horatius because I'd found he would
With "with all his harness on his back" cross any
creek in flood.

And when we reached the Round Lagoon, we let him
drink and graze,
And made and drank a cup of tea, and talked of other
days;
It was winter time but bracing and beautiful and bright,
And when the daylight failed we knew there'd be a
moonlit night.

"That precious baby," my wife said, "I'll take her out
a bit
And I'll but her 'neath these bushes while here awhile
we sit;
Those new goods smell so stuffy, she will need some
cool fresh air."
So she took her out, and wrapped her up, and gently
placed her there.

We talked and tarried rather long, then harnessed up in
haste.
And in the van the things we'd used we carefully re-
placed;
But each trusting to the other, by some strange freak of
fate,
Hidden beneath the bushes, we forgot our baby Kate.

We hurried home but, now and then, midst talk of many
things,
We blessed the precious baby, "the dear angel without
wings;"
And when at last Horatius before our sliprails stood
We both said, for the twentieth time, "Well, hasn't she
been good!"

It was awful, I can tell you ! I never shall forget
My wife's face in the moonlight, o'er the empty bassinet ;
" I made sure you'd put her in, George ! " " I don't
know who's to blame,"
I said in desperation, " but I thought you did the same ! "

We soon had old Horatius out, and Postboy in instead,
And back went tearing through the bush in silence and
in dread ;
We reached the Round Lagoon again, the stillness was
profound,
And the spot where we had left her we very quickly
found.

And there she was, and wide awake, with little soft
white fist
Trying hard to make up somehow for what she must
have missed,
She smiled and crooned as usual and seemed somehow
to think
That it was very funny, and then had a glorious drink.

Watchmen, What of the Night ?

Ho ! watchmen, what of the night ?
Have the dark hours well nigh worn ?
And the first pale beams of light
Brought news of the coming morn ?
" There is much to make us hopeful
That the worst is nearly o'er ;
That midnight has been reached and passed—
Passed to return no more ! "

Ho ! watchmen, what of the night ?—
Again we wait your reply.
Have the black clouds of sin ta'en flight ?
Are the hope-stars yet in the sky ?
" There is much that confirms the promise
Of a bright and glorious day ;
The mountain-tops have a golden flush,
And the valley mists melt away."

Ho ! watchmen, what of the night ?
Are ye hopeful in your endeavour
To gain for mankind every right,
And banish oppression for ever ?
Ye who stand, firm and devoted,
Pleading for downtrodden man—
Are the oppressors relenting ?
What signs of day do ye scan ?

Ho ! watchmen, what of the night—
The night of a sin-cursed world ?
Is the sword still bared for the fight,
And the banner of strife unfurled ?
Have nations yet learnt forbearance,
Peace, and goodwill to each other ?
Have men found in all, black or white,
In each man, a friend and a brother ?

Ho ! watchmen, watch through the night !
Toil on in your tasks of love !
Watch, till ye hail the mid-day light
Flooding the world from above !
Watch on—till the darkness is gone,
And broken is every fetter ;
Hope on—for a world made perfect ;
Toil on—to make it better !

The Old Village Church.

On a little, woody hillock, a gently rising ground,
The old church stood, and might be seen from many a
mile around ;
Its quaint, square, ivied tower, standing high above the
trees,
Its ever-changing weather-vane, turning with every
breeze ;
And day and night, all the year round, the big bell used
to chime,
Reminding all who heard it of the ceaseless flight of
time.

Whene'er I hear the city bells sounding o'er many a street—
Not half so sweet their music seems as that we used to greet
With calm and Christian gladness, on the happy Sabbath day,
From that jubilant bell-tower in the village far away :
So clear, so full of music, and the never-changing tune—
As joyous in December, as the sunny days of June.

And through its Gothic arches, with careful, reverent tread,
We walked, o'er sacred ashes, on the grave-stones of the dead.
The records, worn by footsteps and the crumbings of decay,
Telling how all man's glory here, is doomed to pass away :
Teaching this solemn truth—sermons in tones they were—
We are but short-lived mortals ; “ strangers and pilgrims here !”

How heavenly was the music, soothing the troubled breast !
We could but think of a better world, its peace, and joy, and rest.
The soft and mellow light, with tints of varied glow,
Streamed through the pictured windows, upon the aisles below.
There we sat and silent listened, as words of cheer and truth
Gave comfort to the aged ones, and counsel good to youth.

Little, wee babes were brought and duly christened there ;
Young children on its green sward held festival each year ;
There the proud rustic lover his blushing sweetheart led,
And many an honest couple within its walls were wed !
And then, when life was done, and all its changes o'er,
The old church still befriended, as in the years before.

We revered that old fabric ; associations dear
Were started in our childhood, and firmly centred there ;
And now I feel their power, wherever I may roam,
Reminding me of holy things and happy days at home—
Reminding me of those I loved, long years since passed
away,
Some in the verdant Spring of life, some in the Winter
grey.

10.—Miscellaneous Poems.

Some of these were written in England where the "snow," the "homeless poor," are not poetic fancies. "Scarborough" is a vivid description. "Appreciations" was written after Mr. Midgley had been contributing two columns per week for a year to the *Daily Mail*—in fact most of the poems in this collection appeared first in the Press. "Their Native Village" relates a common enough experience, and the pathos of it is perennial. "The Talking Gum" is a longer effort, not without considerable merit.

A Dead Calm.

The sea is still ; no crested waves
Now chase us o'er the heaving deep :
The full-orbed moon looks calmly down,
And a few stars their vigils keep.

No need to watch ; lash up the wheel !
No need to toil ; leave sail and rope !
So rest we now,—but 'tis the ease
Which knoweth neither fear nor hope !

Such are life's calms ! they lull to rest ;
But then we speed not while we sleep ;
We speed the fastest on life's main,
In stormy winds, o'er stormy deep !

“*Spes non Fracta.*”

The sun shines on ; flowers germinate and bloom ;
Life rises, even from the silent tomb.

While the heart beats, and while its streams do flow,
New hopes may spring—more lasting beauties grow.

A faded rainbow seems that transient past—
Broken, destroyed, with the first tempest's blast !

But while the sea rolls, streams will have their flow ;
Where roots are left, fresh roses yet will blow.

And while God lives, and blesses from above,
I still have left, One I can trust and love !

Oh ! Could I But Live O'er Again.

“ Oh ! could I but live o'er again,”
I heard a fair one say,
“ I would not cause such bitter pain,
Nor cast such love away ;
I would not play that double part,
That wanton, strange deceit,
Which crushed as loving, faithful heart
As ever yet did beat.

“ Oh ! come back, come back years of youth !
I know now how to prize
A proudly noble mind of truth,
That could false vows despise :
I know what soothes the spirit now,
I know what chafes and frets ;
I know that they who folly sow,
Reap anguish and regrets.”

The Snow Storm.

Noiseless in the Winter night ;
Silent as an angel's flight ;
Spotless as their robes of white—
The snow flakes fall.

On the mountain's rugged brow,
Where the stunted fir-trees grow ;
On the shepherd's hut below—
Down comes the snow.

Every frosted silver grain,
Falling on the barren plain,
Makes it like a crystal main—
Cold, clear, and still.

And, like phantom ships, the trees
Wave their white spars in the breeze ;
Straining, creaking, ill at ease—
Up in the shrouds.

Drifting here, drifting there ;
Filling pitfalls everywhere :
'Twill make the woodman walk with care
Across the moor.

At morn, the lads, with wild delight,
Will rush to greet the welcome sight
Eager to join the harmless fight—
With cheeks aglow.

Scarborough.

The sun set late, mid clouds of crimson bright,
Tinging the sea with red ;
Evening has melted into star-lit night,
The moon sails overhead.

Only a milder day seems such a night,
Under a milder sun ;
Which, like a daring prince, had claimed its right
Before its chief had gone.

The linking wavelets tell their secrets still—
Secrets man may not know ;
And coloured lights from mansions on the hill,
Shine on the beach below.

From open windows in the crowded town,
Bright eyes gaze o'er the deep ;
And strains of music sweet come floating down
To lull the waves to sleep.

But like those hearts which some great grief have known,
They cannot tranquil be ;
But, grateful for the kindly pity shown,
Mourn on more silently.

Pale ship-lights glimmer on the sea afar—
Stars in a lower sky ;
Masts, sails, and cordage, every beam and spar
Revealed as they pass by.

And, glad with spoil, the loaded fishing crafts
Come with their sails spread wide ;
Borne homeward by the gentle breeze that wafts,
Helped by the landward tide.

And on the beach the pleasure-loving throng
Yet linger, loth to part ;
The ringing laughter and the merry song
Telling their joy of heart.

Over the rocks, over each shingly bay,
In Summer garments light,
Young, happy wanderers dream the hours away
Of this warm, lovely night.

While a few favoured children, with their hands
As busy as can be,
Are building fast their breakwaters of sand,
In hopes to check the sea.

Through every cleft, into each rock-worn cave,
With steady, certain speed,
On comes the restless tide, wave after wave,
Tossing the floating weed.

Winter.

Hark ! how the Winter wind
Howls through the dismal street !
How well his piercing voice proclaims,
Blest is the spot where comfort reigns,
Where peace and plenty meet.

Just draw the blinds aside,
And peer into the gloom !
See Cynthia pale, with clouds o'ercast—
Dark sullen clouds, that hurry past
Like culprits to their doom.

List to the teeming rain !
With low and plaintive wail,
It rattles at the window-frame ;
As though 'twould fain admission gain,
And shun the driving gale.

No sounds salute the ear,
Save those borne by the storm !
And save the measured tramp of feet—
The watchman on his nightly beat ;
Lone sentinel till morn.

Enough ! draw round the fire,
That friend on friend may gaze.
Though bleak old Winter rave and shout,
Our castle-home can keep him out—
Stir up a cheerier blaze !

God help the homeless poor !
This thought alloys our bliss—
Alas ! too true that thousands roam,
Without a friend, without a home,
In such a night as this.

God give us thankfulness,
Reverent humility !
And may each blessing Thou hast given—
Each joy of earth and hope of heaven—
Incline our hearts to Thee !

Appreciations.

Thanks, from my heart, I send to those
Who have, from day to day,
Sent me their thanks since I began
My rhyming by the way.

From friends of old, from friends unknown,
From places far and near,
The messages that cheered have come,
Through all my minstrel year.

A year begun with little hope
That any song from me
Would catch the ear and touch the heart
Of those who chanced to see.

For I had spent so much of life
In haunts of toil and trade,
That I had almost come to think
That man for these was made.

Until, grown weary, from the ranks
With faltering feet I fell,
And found when I no more could do,
Something remained to tell.

The fountain by the dusty way
 Had long since ceased to flow,
 But deep beneath the drifted sands
 I found the spring below.

From which I draw, in loving cup,
 The draughts with which I try
 In fellow-feeling to refresh
 The weary passers-by.

Old Letters.

I keep them locked in a casket,
 I deem them most precious lore,
 Memorials of departed ones
 Gone where they wander no more.

And in my solitude musing,
 With writers so long since fled,
 Over these old letters poring—
 I converse oft with the dead.

The words grow fainter and fainter,
 Time-worn and faded with tears,
 But each one has been engraven
 Deep on my heart for years.

Some tell of the days of childhood—
 Repicturing far back scenes ;
 Others of youth and prime manhood,
 Full of bright, hopeful dreams.

A few I open with trembling,
 And the tears will not keep back,
 When I look on the names surrounded
 Within deep borders of black.

Breathings of early friendship,
 And plighted love and truth—
 Warm yet with the life and the heart-glow,
 The frankness and spirit of youth.

Written from far foreign places,
Dated in far remote times,
Recalling old voices and faces
From torrid and temperate climes.

For me they are full of meaning,
Though most unpoetic they be!
Magic mirrors, revealing, reflecting
What none but my eyes can see.

And they cause me to think of that meeting
With those who have passed on before—
Where ocean, or death, or distance,
Shall never divide us more.

I will not leave them to any;
But ask that these letters may be
Placed on my breast in the coffin,
And quietly buried with me.

Their Native Village.

“No thank you, cabby, we will walk; we know the way
of old,
But you can take our boxes to the ‘Yellow Marigold,’ ”
“The old inn is pulled down, sir, and the old landlord is
dead.
His son, twelve years since, built and runs the ‘Cyclist’s
Rest,’ instead.”

“Ah yes, for sure, I think I heard, but I had quite forgot,
I’m thinking of things as they were at Little Nethercot:
Well, take them to the ‘Cyclist’s Rest,’ and tell the host
that we
Are going round by the Stepping Stones, the water mill
to see.”

“Why bless my heart ! how long is it since you were
here before ?
The Stepping Stones and Mill are gone, this twenty
years or more ;
A small-arms factory has been built, where once the
grist-mill stood,
And Little Nethercot is joined by bridge to Nettlewood.”

(The cabman took their luggage, and took their generous
pay,
“ They seem the happiest couple I’ve seen for many a day,
But Winkle and his Gretchen will much astonished be,
At many things in Nethercot, when they the changes
see.”)

“ Come take my arm, dear wife, in the good old-fashioned
way,
Just as you did when we were young, before we sailed
away ;
We walked these lanes as lovers, when life before us
spread,
And walk them now, in love the same, though forty years
have fled.

“ Have you forgotten, darling, our long walks in this
lane ?
And don’t you wish, Naomi, for those young years again ?
See yonder is the village church, where you and I were
wed,
And from yon tower the wedding bells pealed merrily
o’erhead.

“ But where now is the smithy shed, where many a
winter night
The smith would lift me on the hearth, to sing and to
recite ?
And I, with the latest ditties, and monologues from town,
Delighted rustic audiences, and ‘brought the houses
down.’

“And where is now the schoolhouse, where we together
 went,
 And shared our tarts and pasties, and books and pencils
 lent?
 Some modern structure now adorns the top of Fish
 Pond Lane :—
 Ah ! darling I am sorry now, that we came back again.

“For no one seems to know us now, or smiles, or says
 ‘good day.’
 Kindred, schoolmates, comrades, have gone, or passed
 away.
 The streets are lonely; house and hill and pasture
 altered seem,
 And all we loved long years ago has passed as in a
 dream.”

Æolus.

Æolus, in his stormy car, drives furiously along;
 Lashing the foaming billows, singing his wild war-song.
 He dashes through the ocean—his chariot wheels turn
 o'er
 The waters of the briny deep, with deaf'ning din and roar.
 But hark ! his strength increases ; more furious now his
 speed—
 As one who lays the stinging lash across a willing steed—
 He shrieks in at the port-holes, and drives the teeming
 rain
 On the hardy sons of Neptune who struggle on the main :
 Then o'er the bleak and rugged rocks, right round our
 sea-girt isle,
 He rides ; nor thinks the circuit more than we might
 think a mile :
 He mounts up from the beach, away 'cross mount and
 moor ;
 Nought cares he for the lordly rich, nor for the peasant
 poor.

Around the castle-tower he sweeps—whistling loud and clear—

Whirling the weather vane about with many a dubious veer.

He visits the lone grave-yard—ghost-like among the stones—

Turning that changing voice of his to shrieks or stifled groans.

Still on and on, with greater speed, he rushes in the dark,
Across the rolling river, and o'er the leafless park;
Over the fallow fields and past each lonely farm,
He hies him, with unbated speed, towards the slumbering town.

He gives no gentle warning, but rushing through the streets

He shouts and deals a rough salute, to everyone he meets:
He is a careless fellow; he knows not rein or curb,
But hurrying like a phantom past, his weird wild voice
is heard.

Death of John Hampden.

JOHN HAMPDEN was the leader of the popular party in the reign of Charles I. and ever memorable because of his refusal to pay the arbitrary and illegal imposts of the King. Clarendon states that he was regarded by the people as their *Pater Patriæ*. He was fatally wounded while leading a charge against Prince Rupert at Chalgrove Field, 1643.

Oh! how we mourned that day
When Chalgrove Field was lost,
And wept in sad and sore dismay
At what that skirmish cost.

We fought 'gainst fearful odds;
And Essex, all too slow,
Marched on the field when all was done,
And Hampden was laid low.

Hot, fierce, and hard till then,
We struggled hand to hand;
We charged the whole of Rupert's force,
Then made a desperate stand.

But when our Chief turned rein,
And left the hard-fought field,
We had no heart to charge again—
We could but fly or yield.

That bullet did great work ;
For when, with drooping head,
We saw him cross the crimsoned brook,
For once we turned and fled.

We could not tell our loss
When our brave Leader fell—
He who in tent, or court, or field
Had led our cause so well.

John Hampden fell and died !
But soon the nation said,
Never a nobler patriot breathed,
Nor braver soldier bled.

But mournful was that day.
When Chalgrove Field was lost ;
We wept in sad and sore dismay
At what that skirmish cost.

Erection of the King's Standard at Nottingham.

The lion showed his teeth at last, sharp-pointed, strong,
and keen ;
And he, who would have tamed the beast, began to
doubt, I ween,
When North, and South, and East, and West, was
heard the mighty cry
Of thousands who had sworn to God to free the land
or die.

And so, for King or Parliament, the Commons or the Crown,

Each city took at once its side—and every port and town;
Old swords were taken down again from where they long
had stayed,

And sharpened, pointed, polished bright, to join the new
crusade.

No more debate, no more delay, but bullets, blades, and
pikes

Must free from thrall a king-cursed land, and force dis-
puted rights.

As great heat brings the thunder storm, so did each
burning wrong

Arouse its own destroying power, and felt the shock
ere long.

The haughty, mad, impulsive King, with all too-eager
speed,

O'er Nottingham his standard raised; and, so that all
might read,

The words were blazoned on the flag, and in the wind
they blew,

Claiming a Cæsar's rights, forsooth, and claiming Cæsar's
due!

Out streamed the royal standard, above the goodly town,
And some looked up with sickly smile, and some with
sturdy frown;

It floated from the Castle Tower, and showed its sign
afar,

The signal of the bursting storm—that long, fierce
bloody war.

Some hailed it with a shout of joy, and rallied neath the
flag;

But others as a murderous sign, a hateful Popish rag!

And through the streets went singing the lightsome
Cavaliers,

Receiving, as they cantered past, a few faint-hearted
cheers.

But that same night, the whistling wind, as if in sport
or spite,
The standard pole asunder snapped, and hurled it from
its height ;
And King and courtiers, the next morn, were startled and
dismayed
To see the flag they perched so high, such dire descent
had made.

They fear the most who sin the most, and have most
cause to fear :
That low-laid ensign seemed to tell of some worse down-
fall near ;
And Charles's men, and Charles himself, oft cursed the
rotten stick,
Or tried to laugh the whole thing off, as some mad Round-
head's trick.

The Talking Gum.

The old gum tree which stood in Roma-street and was looked
upon as one of the land marks of Brisbane, was at last removed
to make way for the electric trams.

My years of vernal growth have gone,
My sluggish sap begins to fail ;
Gone are the days of mirth and song
And bursts of laughter in the gale.

Such tongue and speech as Nature gave
I use but seldom ; but in thought
I ponder problems sad and grave,
And muse o'er what the years have wrought—

Of good and ill, of light and shade,
In their alternate ebb and flow,
Of havoc that the storms have made
And giants by the axe laid low.

Fair was the dawn of life to me,
With comrades close on every hand,
Ten thousand kindred saplings we
Stood slim and strong o'er all the land.

Our roots drank nectar from the pool
Round which in peaceful shade we stood,
And by its waters clear and cool
We grew apace and life was good.

Good, when the sudden sunlight streamed
On tree-tops that above us towered
Where myriad silvery dewdrops gleamed
And mixed with blossoms on us showered.

While shrill-voiced parrots whirled around
And cockatoos renewed their quest,
Where bees and birds in blossoms found
The honeydew they loved the best.

No sombre, saucy sparrows then
Mingled with theirs, their hungry cry,
Types of a race of starving men
And toil hard pressed by poverty.

In summer noon and winter night ;
Through calm and storm, through drought and
flood ;
Young seedlings grew to giant height
A legion-numbered brotherhood.

The only pain we knew was when
The lightning smote some stately trunk,
Or when by hands of savage men
Deep notches in our bark were sunk.

So passed our fresh young years away
Nourished in liberty and light,
Growth and expansion came each day,
Rest and reflection came at night.

.

Then came new sounds betokening change,
Harsh jangling of the bullock bell,
Barking of dogs and bleating strange,
Upon the startled night air fell.

When daylight dawned, there moving past,
Were herds of kine and flocks of sheep—
Forerunners of the changes vast—
More strange than strangest dreams of sleep.

Primeval solitude was o'er ;
The ancient order passed away ;
When moved far inland from the shore
The heralds of the white man's sway.

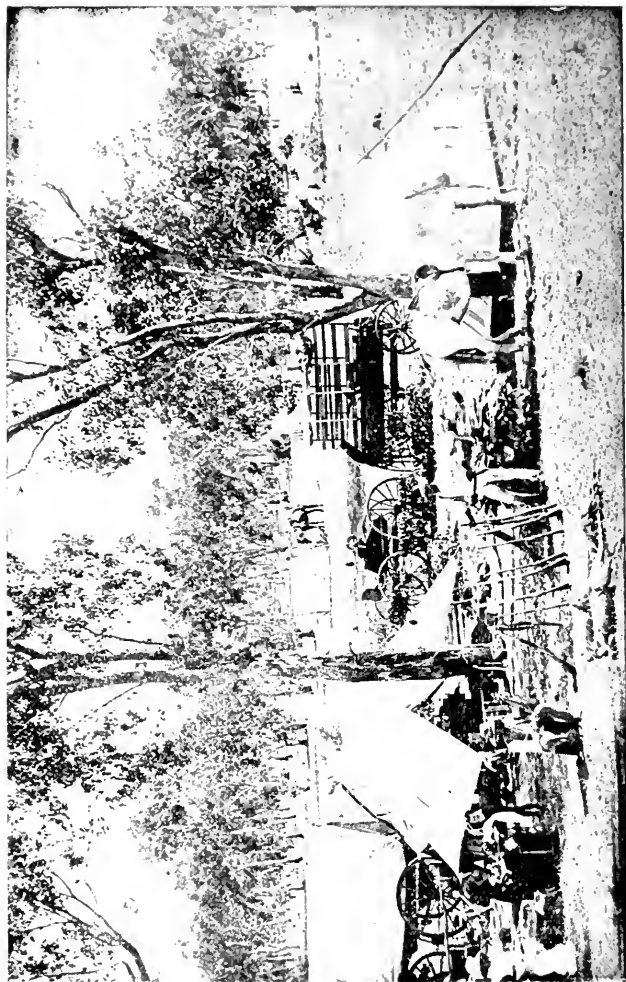
What boots the change ? I ponder well
O'er all that I have heard and seen,
And which were best 'twere hard to tell—
Things as they are or long had been ?

So long, indeed, no tongue can tell—
No speech of man or beast or tree—
When first upon the land there fell
The order that has ceased to be.

Around me now on every hand
Stretch busy streets, and in their midst
A lonely sojourner I stand
And watch men's struggles to exist.

Pale faces, worn with toil and care
Pass to and fro from morn to night,
Showing no sign that earth is fair,
Or life to them is sweet and bright.

Treasures untold of soil and mine,
Of fruitful earth and teeming flood,
Of Nature's stores and genial clime
Monopolised, misunderstood !



"Then Came New Sounds Betokening Change"



Trees of my tribe enough to build
All homeless ones a dwelling place :
And virgin plains which ploughed and tilled
Would clothe and feed a starving race !

Sombre the shadows of the hills
Sombre the shadows of the trees,
But the dark shades of human ills
Are only feebly typed by these.

The lust of wealth, of unearned gain,
Has found new fields of wider range ;
The fruitful seed is golden grain ;
The men that reap—the men “ on 'Change.”

Fair Southern land doomed at the first,
Penal abode of old-world crime,
Shall it by old-world greed be cursed,
And arrogance of feudal time ?

Men have not learned to live like trees,
Each with his share of fruitful earth,
Each with his share of sun and breeze
Each with his share of toil and mirth.

The master and the man are here
Where only both in one should be —
Each man the master of his share
Of toil and rest and liberty.

I share man's joy o'er battles won
But wonder, when the strife I see,
When man's millenium shall come,
When Paradise restored shall be.

My sap runs cold when past my feet
Stagger besotted drunken men,
Supplying details that complete
Pictures of old-world woes again.

The helpless habit, maudlin tongue,
The speech polluted and profane,
Irreverence of old and young,
To the great God and His great name.

.

But see, the sparrows seek their nest,
The swallows twitter and depart.
The evening shadows soothe to rest
The mournful musings of my heart.

The breeze that dipped in ocean wave
And felt the splash of silvery spray
Comes with the solace that I crave
And whispers hope of brighter day.

The myriad stars of heaven look down
Upon a slumbering hemisphere,
On silent bush and sleeping town
Expanding wider year by year.

Æolian music, low and sweet,
The breezes in the starlight play
And ancient promises repeat
Maturing still through long delay.

By process slow, but fixed and sure
My trunk and limbs expanded grew.
And so must grow the good and pure
In human life—the just and true.

The laws that shelter human life
Shall shelter each man's right to live ;
Nor by the scanty bread of strife
Nor by the dole the rich may give.

The day shall come, when I am gone,
When hoarded wealth shall be unknown :
When men shall live by bread well won
From seed and soil and sheaf their own.

Knowledge of truth and right has grown,
And, as the years their courses run,
The heart shall learn the truth to own—
The will to use the knowledge won.

And love deep rooted and widespread
Shall flourish like a mighty tree
Whose fruit shall be a nation's bread
Whose leaves shall leaves of healing be.



Notes.

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15. **a silent shore.** In 1770 Captain Cook sailed along the Queensland coast; Flinders followed in 1799; Oxley arrived in Moreton Bay in 1823. The settlement then contained a few soldiers, some convicts, and perhaps 50,000 aborigines. Since then the magic wand of civilisation has changed the face of the land. Queensland became a self-governing colony in 1859 (pop. about 30,000); and a "State" of the Commonwealth in 1901 (pop. 503,266). Along its coast to-day from Brisbane (cap., pop 120,000) to Thursday Island are numerous progressive ports and settlements; and in place of Cook's "silent shore" is a highway of busy traffic, coastal and oversea.
- mines**, *e.g.*, Gympie, Mount Morgan, the Towers, Cloncurry, and many others; **plains**, *e.g.*, the far-famed Darling Downs; **plantations** of sugar-cane, *e.g.*, in the districts of Moreton, Bundaberg, Mackay, etc.
- varied wealth.** In 1905 there was exported wool (£2,649,751), gold (£2,627,096), and sugar (£1,448,845), live stock (£1,132,081), meat (£841,607), hides and skins (£430,356); and the "browsing kine" are giving Queensland a butter industry that is expanding beyond any poet's dream.
- peaceful acquisition**, except for occasional skirmishes with the "blacks" no blood was shed.
16. **platform**, etc., alliteration, as frequently elsewhere.
- blessedness.** "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20: 35).
- doing good.** "The luxury of doing good."
- victories.** "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war."
18. **darkness . . . dust; blade . . . bloom;** alliteration is freely used. *cf.* **tiny, tufted; braving . . . blustering** (p. 19); **true to time and tint and taste** (p. 20); and so, frequently throughout the poem.
- crowns . . . years.** *cf.* Psalm 65: 11.
19. **by bread alone.** *cf.* Matthew 4: 4.
20. **floral dial.** *i.e.*, the regular succession of differing flowers that mark the different twelve months of the year, like the figures on a twelve-division dial.
- Coo-ee.** "A peculiar prolonged whistling sound made by the Australian aborigines as a call or signal." Many a dweller in the Queensland "bush" can imitate the call admirably.
- sep'rator**, *i.e.*, cream separator.

21. **bole**, *i.e.*, tree-trunk.
loveliness does not rhyme, of course, with **loneliness**;
 lovely dress would be a cheap emendation, but the author
 is not exacting with rhymes, provided they do not offend
 the ear.
22. **or**, *i.e.*, either.
red blooms, red roses typifying sacrifice; golden-hued dahlia
 for mercy; immortelles for the pure Life Beyond.
A Bush Grave. In this, as in **Jacob** (p. 81) and other poems,
 the author regards the title as an intimate part of the
 poem to be supplied in sense throughout the piece; *e.g.*,
whose (in line 4) *i.e.*, "whose grave."
23. **wonga pigeons**—found in the Australian "bush."
curlew. "A wading bird, remarkable for its long, slender
 curved bill" and its mournful weird cry.
24. **Afterthoughts of God**. "He made the grass," writes one,
 "and saw it was good, and smiled; when, lo! there sprang
 up everywhere flowers." Longfellow has said:—
 "Spake full well, in language quaint and olden,
 One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine,
 When he called the flowers blue and golden,
 Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine."
25. **Peach blossoms**. This poem has many defects of rhyme,
e.g., winsome and welcome, whispers and sisters, spring and
 blossoming, desponding and responding, maidenhood and
 hardihood; but the thoughts are so winsome and innocent
 that one hardly notices the rhyme. What could be
 prettier, for instance, than the quaint conceit that ends
 the first verse?
toil and spin. *cf.* Matthew 6: 28.
26. **prune**, *i.e.*, preen.
laughter in their eyes, *i.e.*, the sunshine that dances in the
 dew of their petals.
moaning evermore. One writes:—
 "Tell me thy secret, O lone sobbing sea!
 Dost thou weep for the unwept in wandering graves,
 A requiem low for the lost in thy waves,
 Whose home is the darkness of shell-spangled caves?
 Tell me thy secret, tell me!"
comforted *cf.* "The heart of Rachel, for her children crying
 Will not be comforted."
threefold explained in the following verse.
27. **unconsumed** perhaps hardly a scientific truth.
27. **care for us** not the anthropocentric view of the universe so
 much as the view embodied in the question:—If God so
 clothe the grass, shall He not much more clothe you?
28. **celestial galaxy** the milky way.

29. **drop . . . fatness.** Psalm 65: 11.
31. **coat** the note of exclamation should be placed after "sunshine."
Poe Edgar Allen Poe b. 1809 d. 1849; one of his many poems is called "The Raven."
32. **livings . . . live** Philosophers from Horace downwards have laughed at the folly of those who in their eagerness to get a grand living squander all that makes life at all worth while (*vivendi perdere causas*).
35. **meek and mild** the author uses phrases reminiscent of verses from Scripture or from hymns, but the use is too frank and appropriate to be called plagiarism. Here the line from the well-known hymn is doubtless used deliberately to recall tender associations.
35. **mural**, *i.e.*, belonging to unfeeling walls, in contrast to the sympathy from living hearts.
36. **more keen** *cf.* "A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things."
specs. familiar English for "spectacles."
40. **banana boys.** The Queensland native-born young men sometimes are good-humoredly styled "Banana-landers," by residents in other States; perhaps from the height of the banana-tree, perhaps because Queensland bananas are so famous and plentiful, perhaps because some Queenslanders can eat bananas (an acquired taste) so heartily!
fags, *i.e.*, fatigues.
breaking, *i.e.*, "breaking in," used of inuring young or wild horses to the saddle.
not near . . . for care surely the *aurea mediocritas*, the ideal contentment that wants neither poverty nor riches, but rejoices to work for daily bread.
41. **good stewardship** *cf.* Matthew 25: 21.
pressed . . . breast, the author maintains the line rhyme throughout the verses, in the third and seventh lines.
the love that gave *cf.* Job 1: 21.
46. **the future held in store** *cf.* "Whose little hands unconscious hold the keys of darkness and of morn."
cord and bowl and wheel *cf.* Eccles. 12: 6 and following verses. The picture of old age there has suggested many of the similes in the present poem.
47. **behold thy mother** *cf.* Matthew 12: 47.
48. **that perishes** *cf.* John 6: 27.
toilest not *cf.* Luke 12: 27,
made of such *cf.* Mark 10: 14.
50. **higher spheres**, a probable reference to the music of the spheres—music that dies not day or night.
50. **stabling**, the word is kept, despite the poor rhyme, because of the association with Luke 2: 7.

51. **Russo-Japanese War**: Commenced February, 1904; peace signed October 14, 1905.
51. **gained or lost**. The same sentiment of the inutility of war is felt in "The Battle of Blenheim," which was, in Caspar's eyes, "a famous victory," but little else.
- Zuyder-Zee**, an allusion to the Hague Conferences. The first took place in 1899. In September, 1906, the Milan Peace Congress made proposals for the arrest of armaments, to be discussed at the second Hague Conference, held in 1907. The "light" that is to "win its way" is perhaps from the windows of Mr. Carnegie's Palace of Peace, destined for the purposes of the Court of Arbitration at the Hague.
52. **a nation's will** delete comma after "will."
53. **Earthquake**. The losses by shock and fire in San Francisco in the terrible disaster of April 18, 1906, were enormous. The fire losses approximated £50,000,000.
- brotherhood of men**—contributions from sympathetic purses oversea soon came to San Francisco, but were in most cases declined, in grateful independence.
54. **lean kine** *cf.* Genesis 41: 27.
searching *cf.* Job 11: 7.
55. **scatters** *cf.* Prov. 11: 24.
56. **sting** *cf.* I. Cor. 15: 55.
57. **wearables**, an obvious coinage on the design of "eatables."
58. **scenes**, throughout the poem the author maintains the metaphors from stage-land; "lights turned out," "curtain," "impromptu," "plaudits," "minor part," "rehearsing," "final call," etc.
60. **closing**, perhaps "enclosing," or "at closing time of day."
61. **"Abide with Me."** H. F. Lyte's familiar hymn.
63. **smiles and soars and sings**, only one of many felicities in the short poem.
latent mirth, the wit and laughter that is sometimes associated with wine.
64. **far spent day** *cf.* Mark 6: 35.
shadowed *cf.* Psalm 23: 4,
64. **hitherward repair** *cf.* the whole of Psalm 84.
Paradise restored an allusion to Milton's work.
65. **"Know in Part"** *cf.* I. Cor. 13: 9.
66. **Why? and How?** the line contains the old riddles of humanity.
searching *cf.* Job. 5: 9 and Roman 11: 33.
know much more "Let knowledge grow from more to more."
pity me *cf.* Psalm 103: 13.

67. **crimson-tinted** *cf.* Homer's line:—"When rosy-fingered Dawn, child of the morning, appeared."
roseate . . . rising . . . sun . . . alliteration.
life laughed—

"Laugh, and the world laughs with you,
 Weep, and you weep alone!
 For this poor old earth must borrow its mirth,
 It has sorrow enough of its own!"

pinches, sharp rises in the road.

68. **cross of stars**, *i.e.*, the Southern Cross.
down the hill. Christina Rossetti's picture of Life's road winding "up hill all the way" is not less poetic.

bridgeless river—

"One more river, and that's the river Jordan!
 One more river, there's one more river to cross!"

pearly gates of the New Jerusalem.

eternal city. Gibbon's "eternal city" as told by Hall Caine is Rome; here the reference is to the city whose builder and maker is God—the New Jerusalem, "that would not pass away."

many mansions *cf.* John 14: 2.

69. **Ferguson**, doubtless a neighbouring farmer.
chastening, Hebrews 12: 11.

71. **sinister bar**, a term popularly, but erroneously, used for *baton*, a mark of illegitimacy. In heraldry the "sinister" (left side of an escutcheon is the side which would be on the left of the bearer of the shield, and opposite the right-hand of the beholder. The "bar" is borne "sinister," across the shield, as a mark of bastardy.

men mourn. The *laudator temporis acti* flourishes still. The poet believes that the best is yet to be, that men's wisdom grows with the process of the suns, and that through all life runs the one increasing purpose.

ashes, the Dead Sea fruit.

72. **buried** *cf.* Luke 19: 20. The whole poem expresses in metre the teaching of the parable of the talents.

73. **brave hearts**, the two lines are an encouragement to all workers. There is to be no magic transformation of humanity; the far-off divine event "to which the whole Creation moves" is to be compassed by many methods; and just as Nature works to her end by awful volcanoes as well as by the silent unfading dew so man is to move upward by social cataclysms no less than by viewless spiritual forces.

integrity *cf.* Psalm 25: 21.

75. **gold** . . . **golden**, an effective play.
snarl, the very word "cynicism" finds its origin in the Greek word denoting "dog."

called his soul, *see* Luke 12: 20.

yoke . . . **Easy** *cf.* Matthew 11: 30.

road . . . **plain** *cf.* Isaiah 35: 8; and Prov. 15: 19.

76. **Barnardo** Dr. T. J. Barnardo (b. 1846 d. 1905) late of Mossford Lodge, Ilford, Eng., was born in Ireland, studied medicine in Edinburgh, where he became F.R.C.S. in 1876; has been for forty years founding and developing philanthropic institutions for the benefit of child waifs; has rescued over 61,000 children (to 30th Sept., 1906), and placed 18,700 in happy circumstances in Greater Britain. Present director, William Baker, M.A., LL.B., 18 to 26 Stepney Causeway, London E.

77. **Beethoven** 1770-1827. Perfected the symphony. In music he expressed all the emotions of the human soul. With Bach (1685-1750), Handel (1685-1759), and Mozart (1756-1791) he forms an immortal quartette of musicians.

78. **sympathy** the thought is that only those who have suffered can truly sympathise with others. "He jests at scars who never felt a wound." It is only when the box (of spikenard) is broken that the sweetness of its fragrance fills the room. Bruised hearts often breathe healing out of their woes, even as plants that only exude their healing odours when bruised.

W. H. Browne born, Pimlico, London 1846; served in Royal Navy and mercantile marine; came to Australia; miner in 1866, on Australian gold-field (N.S.W.), and subsequently in Tasmania and many parts of Queensland; elected president of Amalgamated Miners' Union; lived at Croydon seven years; returned as its Parliamentary representative in 1893, 1896, 1899, 1902; won great respect in and out of Parliament; Secretary for Mines and Secretary for Public Instruction in the Dawson Ministry (December, 1899); Leader of Labour Party; unmarried; died April, 1904.

80. **earthen vessels** *see* 2 Cor. 4: 7.

went about *see* Acts 10: 38.

81. **utmost choice** this line is well set in a memorable verse that has almost borrowed a glow from immortality itself.

Inmost heart *cf.* Prov. 23: 7.

82. **transferred** *cf.* Ezek. 18: 2.

83. **prayer** the line recalls—

"Then when on earth I breathe no more,
 The prayer oft mixed with tears before."

(C. Elliott, 1789-1871).

wax old *cf.* Psalm 102 : 26.

83. **In the Quarry**, a poem of lofty tone, describing well the building of the famous Temple. It is almost impossible not to see in the last verse a touch of autobiography.

85. **vineyard** the frequent simile of Isaiah and Jeremiah.

88. **tears** *cf.* Psalm 56 : 8.

sacrifice *cf.* Psalm 51 : 17,

found mercy *cf.* Pope's lines—

"Teach me to feel another's woe
To hide the faults I see
That mercy I to others show
That mercy show to me."

88. **no glad companionship** *cf.* II. Cor. 6 : 15.

89. **eye . . . seen** *cf.* I. Cor. 2 : 9.

the path . . . just *cf.* Prov. 4 : 18.

with foundations *cf.* Hebr. 11 : 10:

91. **knowledge**, "a beam in darkness ; let it grow !" (Tennyson).

93. **pyramid . . . crumbling**. The present height of Cheops (the greatest pyramid and one of the three in the Memphis group) is 451 feet, as against 481 feet originally. Its base covers 13 acres.

peace . . . rest Bethlehem's peace on earth, and good-will to men ; the "rest" is that promised to "all that labour and are heavy-laden." (Matthew 11 : 28).

"When deep sleep." Four verses exceptionally beautiful in thought.

94. **seraphim** *cf.* Isaiah 6 : 2.

fire *cf.* II. Thess. 1 : 8, and Luke 9 : 54.

95. **"awful silences"** *i.e.*, in the "intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven" (Arnold's "Self-Dependence"), as well as in the "long voids of unrecorded man."

appalling distances seated on a ray of light we could reach the moon in less than two seconds ; the sun in eight minutes ; alpha centauri (one of the nearest stars) in about $3\frac{1}{2}$ years ! A ray of light travelling at the rate of 176,000 miles a second, day and night without ceasing, would take 14 years to reach one of the smallest stars visible to the naked eye ; yet this appalling distance is only a river's breadth to the Atlantic ocean when compared with our distance from other world's of light that the telescope reveals—"if you were to travel for ever you would only then be half way !"

pervading *cf.* Pope (Essay on Man).

All are but parts of one stupendous whole
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul
That, changed in all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth as in the ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glowes in the stars, and blossoms in the trees.

Thou establish *cf.* Psalm 90 : 1.

Ichabod, *i.e.* "The glory has departed" *cf.* I. Sam. 4 : 21.

Bethel, "The house of God" *cf.* Genesis 28 : 29.

Beulah "married" *cf.* Isaiah 62 : 4.

97. **Elim**, oak-trees ; *cf.* Exod 15 : 27.

"In Elim were twelve fountains of water, and three score
and ten palm trees" (Numbers 9 : 33).

weary . . . "Come unto Me . . . and I will give you
rest" (Matth. 11 : 28. "If any man thirst, let him come
to Me and drink" (John 7 : 37). "We have thought of Thy
loving kindness" (Psalm 48 : 9).

risen dead *i.e.* Lazarus (John 11 : 44.)

sinks **calls** recalls Tennyson's lines—

"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me."

Nazareth, etc. The references are to the familiar incidents in
our Lord's life ; the "workshop" being where Joseph, the
carpenter, wrought ; its "lowly cot" recalling the childhood
of Jesus ; "Cana joys" referring to the marriage feast
(John 2 : 1-11) ; "Bethany's hospitalities" referring to the
home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, where our Lord spent
so many evenings ; the "darker scenes" being the lonely
Gethsemane and sacrificial Calvary of many a human life.

98. **Intercessions** recalls C. Wesley's lines—

"He ever lives above
For me to intercede,"

"He ever liveth to make intercessions for them" (Hebrews
7 : 25).

Slay me *cf.* Job 13 : 15.

tranquillity the single word is the effectiveness of the line.
For the thought *cf.* Keble's verse:—

"O Lord my God, to Thou Thy holy will—
I will be still ;

I will not stir, lest I forsake Thine arm
And break the charm,

Which lulls me, clinging to my Father's breast,
In perfect rest."

100. **beastly** innocent slang for "obnoxious" or "disagreeable."
101. **Amazons**—originally a race of female warriors who founded an Empire on the river Thermodon, in Asia Minor. They cut off their right breast (the word "amazon" means "without one breast") so that it might not incommode them in shooting and throwing the javelin. Later, the term was applied to some American females, who joined their husbands in repelling the Spaniards on the banks of the Marañon (afterwards called the "Amazon"). The word, generally, denotes a strong warring woman.
- hiding** *i.e.*, a whipping: perhaps because it was done with a cow-hide or a horse-hide; or because it was administered to the "hide" of refractory youth; or because the punished delinquent preferred to "hide" himself from public gaze for a while after the ordeal.
103. **Felix**, *i.e.* happy, fortunate, blessed.
105. **Goths**—one of the ancient Teutonic races; regarded as barbarians. The term is sometimes now applied to persons defective in taste.
106. **Teddy**, perilously near to bathos, but the picture of the mother's eyes, dim with a great joy, just saves it.
107. **Hanging Judges**. Punning in humorous verse is common enough; in Hood, Ingoldsby, Sir William Gilbert, and a host of smaller men. Was it not the first-named who declared that he had to make his pen fly for a "lively Hood"?
112. **match or gun**—the careless lighting of a pipe, or camp-fire, might easily start ruinous bush-fires; the "gun" handled carelessly, could soon cause damage to both stock and grass.
113. **rouse** to "rouse" in harmless slang, means to utter loud (*i.e.* rousing) upbraids at all and sundry. The "s" is not pronounced like "z," but short, as in the noun "house."
118. **what of the night**, *cf.* Isaiah 21: 6.
120. **Strangers**, *cf.* Psalm 39: 12.
122. **Spes non fracta** *i.e.* "a hope not broken."
124. the "milder sun" is, of course, the moon.
124. **Cynthia** *i.e.* the moon. Apollo (whose type is the sun) and Artemis (the Grecian Diana or moon goddess) were both born at Cynthus, a mountain in Delos.
126. **my minstrel year**. Mr. Midgley during 1904 and 1905 sent a weekly contribution of three columns "For Sunday" to a Brisbane newspaper, and in it appeared many of the verses collected in this volume.
127. **Winkle**. "Rip van Winkle" (a character, created by Washington Irving in the *Sketch Book*) has come to mean any hopelessly out-of-date citizen, who has gone to sleep while the world has rushed on.

130. **Aeolus** is the god of the winds. The word in Greek, means "changeable."
- Neptune** the god of the sea.
131. **our sea-girt isle** this poem was written in England.
- leafless** *i.e.* it is winter time for the trees.
- unbated** for unabated.
- careless** *i.e.* free from care or anxiety.
132. **at Nottingham** *i.e.* August 23rd, 1642.
135. **notches** perhaps made with a stone axe, to blaze a track, or for the purpose of getting bark for humpies.
137. **penal abode** referring to the early settlements in 1824. The pioneering party of thirty convicts, in the brig "Amity" were first located at Redcliffe Point, but soon afterwards were removed to the present site of Brisbane. In 1884 penal establishments were abandoned in the Moreton Bay District, and "a community of settlers replaced the goal and the chain-gangs."
138. **Æolian**—the æolian harp was a musical instrument, so named from its producing its wild and often exquisite strains merely by the action of the wind (Æolus—the god of the winds).
139. **leaves of healing** *cf.* Rev. 22: 2; "and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."
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Addendum.

p. 16, l. 36 omit "and" after "blessings."



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